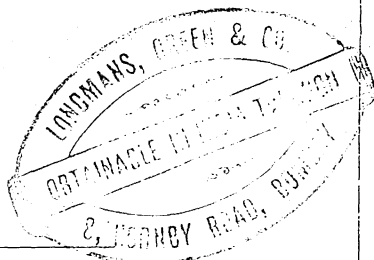
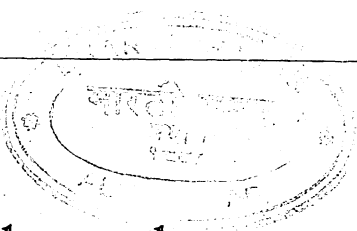


CANAL OF THE GIUDECCA, VENICE.
(From the painting by E. W. Cooke, in the Tate Gallery.)

Arnold's Home & Abroad Readers

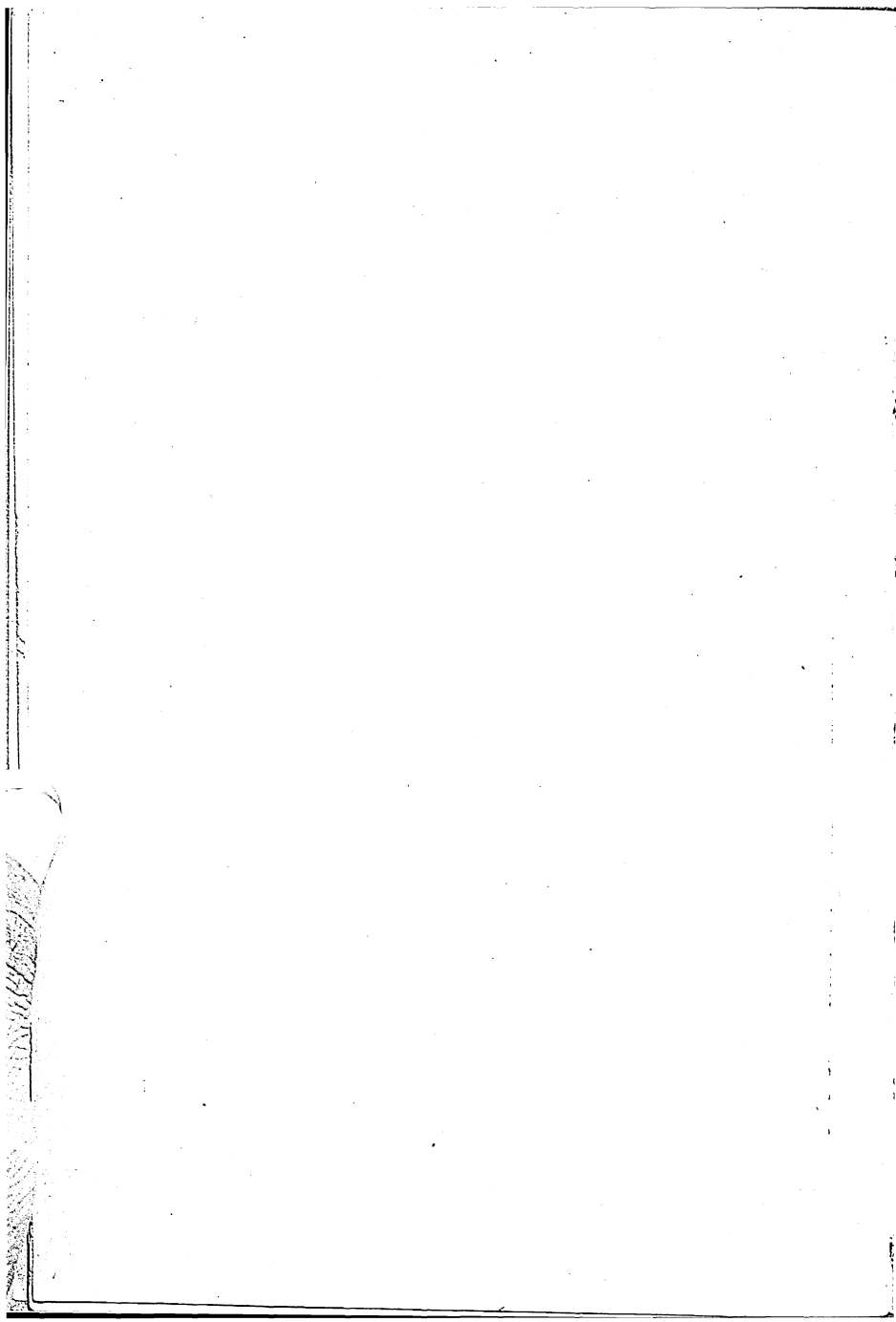


Book V.

The World's Great Powers—
Present and Past

WITH MESSRS:
LONGMANS, GREEN & CO.'S
COMPLIMENTS.

London —
Edward Arnold



PREFACE

THIS book is the fifth volume of ARNOLD'S HOME AND ABROAD READERS, of which the following is a complete list.

BOOK I.—*Glimpses of the Homeland*. 135 pages.
Price 10d.

First ideas of geography for very young readers. Conversational lessons descriptive of walks in town and country, and at the seaside.

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The British Isles and Empire, the former treated as a unit, and the latter as an expansion of the former. Special attention to the "five nations," Britain, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa,

Book V.—*The World's Great Powers—Present and Past.* 228 pages. Price 1s. 6d.

Sections on Britain as a World Power, France, Germany, Russia, Italy, Austria, the United States, and Japan; noting those distant parts of the world in the possession of the Great Powers. Shorter chapters on the other countries of Europe.

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The chief divisions of the world. The countries of the world at present independent of the Great Powers regarded chiefly as markets for their commerce. Chapters on great commercial cities in all parts of the world, and on world journeys by land and sea. The whole forming a complete outline revision of the geography of the world, with special attention to the leading trading nations.

The books of this series do not pretend to deal with what is called "scientific" geography. The aims of the author in dealing with any given country are to draw attention to some of the chief physical characteristics, and to connect them with the life of the people; to encourage the pupil to read the map in an intelligent manner; to interest him a little in the history and modern position of the country under consideration; and generally to give him such information as may be of use to him in understanding the great political and commercial activities of the modern world.

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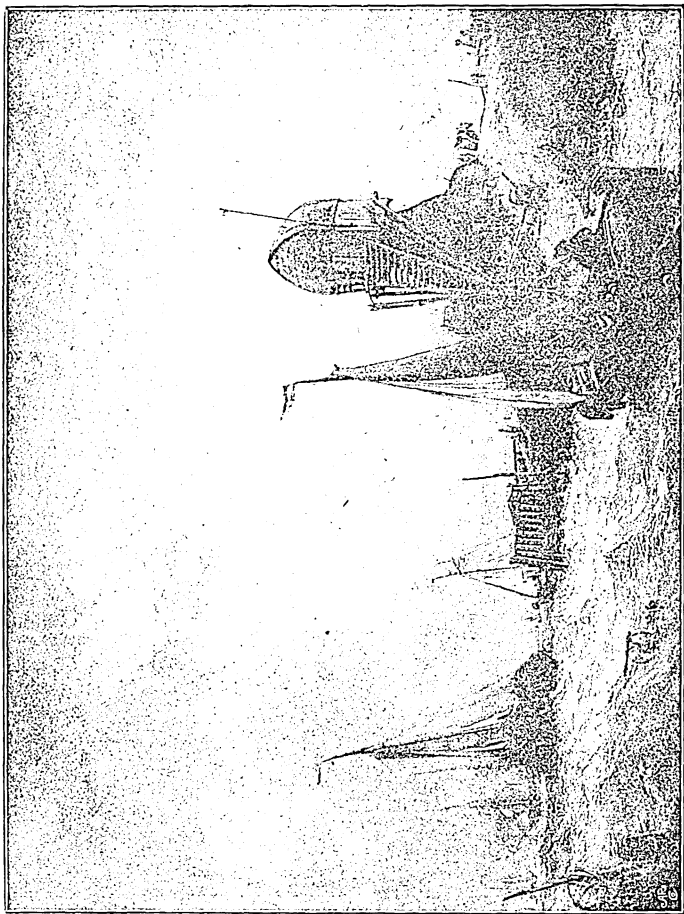
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Men my brothers, men the workers, ever reaping something new :
That which they have done but earnest of the things that they
shall do :

* * * * *

Thro' the shadow of the globe we sweep into the younger day:
Better fifty years of Europe than a cycle of Cathay.

A. Tennyson.



ENTRANCE TO THE ZUYDER ZEE, TEXEL ISLAND.—W. C. STANFIELD, R.A.
(From the original picture in the Tate Gallery.)

ARNOLD'S HOME AND ABROAD READERS

BOOK V.

INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER.—THE WORLD'S GREAT POWERS.

AMONG the many nations of the world there are some which are more powerful than the others. People have got into the habit of calling these nations the Great Powers; and it is proposed in this book to learn something about each of them in turn.

We shall number among these Great Powers the following countries: Great Britain, France, Germany, Austria, Russia, Italy, the United States and Japan.

Six of these are to be found in Europe. The United States forms part of North America. The islands of Japan lie to the east of Asia, and we may consider that they belong to that continent.

There are also in Europe certain countries which were once very powerful, but have lost their foremost place among the nations. We shall learn a little about these countries, and try to find out why they are no longer among the Great Powers of the World.

It is well to ask ourselves at the beginning what we wish to know about each of these great countries.

The most interesting thing about each country is the life of the people who live in it. We shall try to keep this well in view throughout this book, and to find out the aims and desires of each nation.

But the kind of life led by the people of any country depends greatly upon the kind of country in which they live. So we must begin in each case by getting a general idea of the nature of the land, the climate and products. And we must constantly try to connect these things with the life of the people.

The climate depends on the position of the country, on its nearness to the sea, on the nature of its land surface, on the kind of winds which sweep over it, or the ocean currents which wash its shores.

Then the climate and the soil together fix the nature of the food products of the country. A moist climate is good for certain things, while others require a dry climate. More warmth, for example, is needed to grow the olive and the orange than to raise wheat and oats. And there is a close connection between the products of the soil and the life and work of the people.

And the character of the people, too, depends greatly upon the climate. If it is extremely hot or cold it tells against the hard work which is necessary to place a nation among the foremost in the world. A temperate climate is best, and it is interesting to note on a globe or a map of the world that the Great Powers belong for the most part to the North Temperate Zone.

The question arises whether there is any particular order in which we ought to deal with the Great Powers of the world.

Our own country takes a foremost place among the

Powers ; and because it is our own we shall place it first and think about it for a short time, not merely as our own home, but as a great World Power at the head of an Empire such as no other great country has ever had.

We might next be tempted to look across the Atlantic and deal with the United States, which was peopled at first by settlers from our own home. But seeing that Britain belongs by her position to Europe, we shall first learn something of the European Powers.

France is our nearest neighbour, and we have had a great deal to do with her in the course of our history, so we shall deal in the second place with this country. Germany is a leading World Power with which we have a great deal to do in the matter of commerce. She is peopled, too, by members of the same race as ourselves—the Teutonic—and this ought to be a bond of sympathy. We shall deal in the third place with Germany.

When we study the history of Europe we find that Germany, Austria and Italy have had a great deal to do with each other ; and we cannot understand the present position of these three countries without knowing how they were connected in past time. So we shall deal next with Austria, and then with Italy.

Russia lies outside the history of Europe for a very long time. But in the reign of Peter the Great, who lived in the time of our George I., she began to take her place as a European nation, and is now a Great Power without a doubt. We shall learn a little in the next place about her and her great empire.

Next we shall consider the States of Europe, whose history lies in the great past ; and having done this we

shall know something about the whole of Europe, but most about those nations of which we shall hear and read a great deal when we leave school to take our place in the world.

Then we must cross the Atlantic, where we shall find a young but very vigorous World Power—the United States of America—one of our chief rivals in trade, and also one of our best customers. Of this great nation we must learn as much as our space will permit.

Lastly we must deal with Japan, a new World Power which, as we shall see, has come quickly to the front during quite recent times. We shall try to understand her position and her aims; for we shall no doubt hear a great deal about this little island nation in the coming years.

CHAPTER I.—A GENERAL SURVEY OF EUROPE.

1.—Position and Surroundings.

NEXT to Australia, Europe is the smallest of the continents, but in power and wealth she is not merely first, but supreme.

The nations of Europe have almost subdued the earth. The greater part of Asia is under the control of Britain and Russia. Africa is being carved out among the European Powers. North and South America are in the hands of men whose forefathers sprang from Western Europe. Australia and New Zealand are peopled by the British race.

Europe has really no right to be called a continent. It is a north-western peninsula of the great land mass of which by far the greater part is taken up by Asia. Indeed,

some people unite these two continents under the name of Eurasia.

Still, Europe and Asia are separate continents. They were divided long years ago when the people of ancient Greece beat back the Persians and made the Ægean Sea and the Sea of Marmora the natural division between Europe and Asia.

In their poetic way the Greeks made a legend of it; and told how Europa, a princess of Asia, dreamed a dream in which she saw two queens at strife for her sake.

One was a queen of Asia whom Europa knew; the other was a stranger, and the princess felt strangely drawn towards this unknown lady, and allowed herself to be led away by her. Then she awoke and prayed to the gods that she might again behold the stranger lady of her dreams.

And not long afterwards Europa was carried away by Jupiter, who had taken the form of a bull and swam with the maiden on his back across the channel, afterwards known as the "Bull's Ford," or Bosphorus. Thus Europe was separated from Asia as the gods had willed, and the dividing-line fixed at the strait now known as the Dardanelles.

As far as the old Greeks knew, Europe was completely cut off from Asia, as well as from Africa. Of the lands to the north, now ruled by the Czar, they had no knowledge. Then, when the Romans came after them and founded a great Empire, they advanced only to the north-west and the north, and not to the north-east.

For many centuries Europe meant the lands which lay to the west of the region between the mouths of the

Vistula and the Dniester. But in due time Russia began to take a part in the affairs of Europe; and the eastern boundary of the continent was moved to the neighbourhood of the Ural Mountains, the Ural River, the Caspian Sea, and the highlands of the Caucasus.

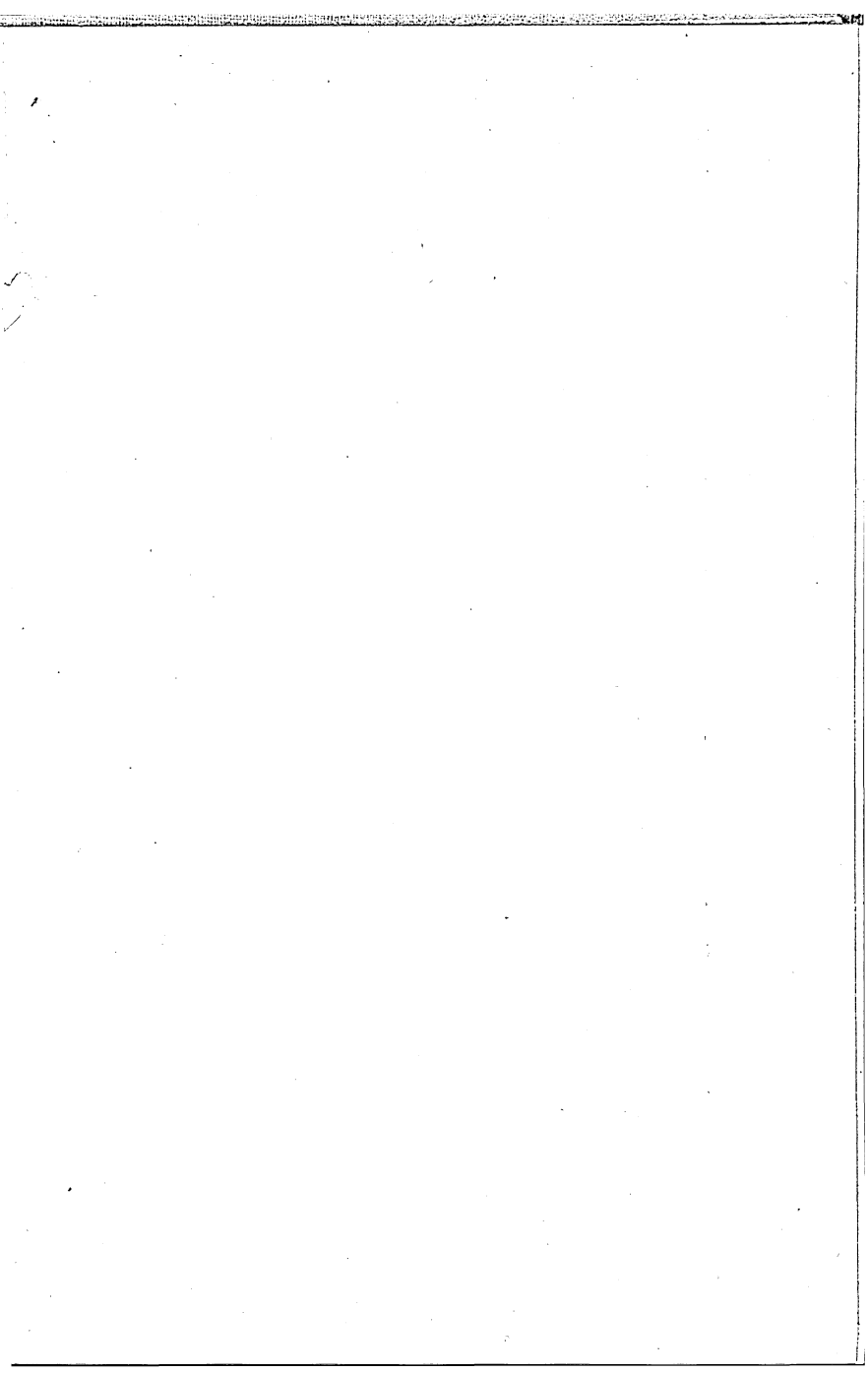
But this eastern boundary is not very important; for a glance at the map reminds us that Russia extends beyond it right across the northern part of Asia to the shores of the Pacific Ocean.

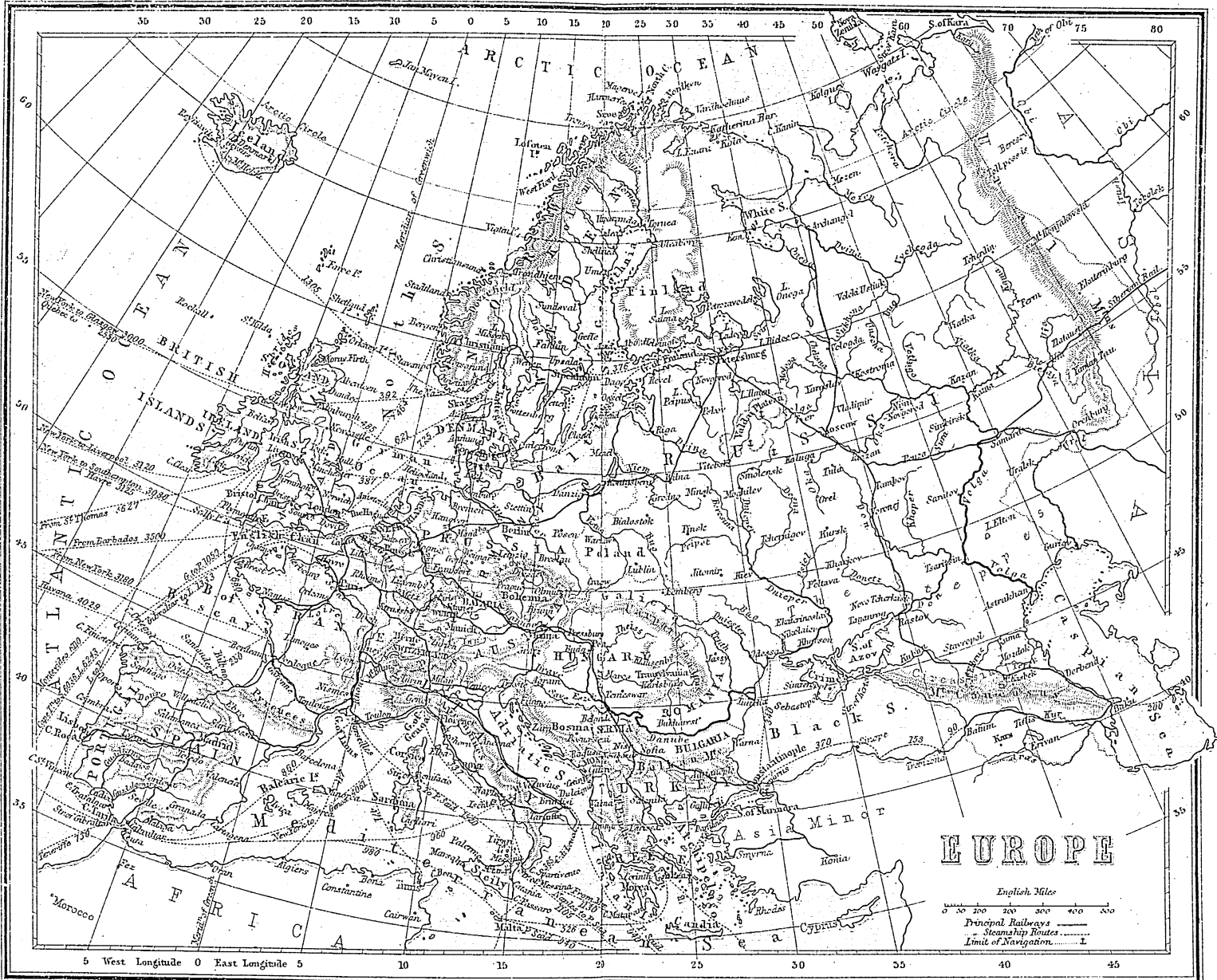
Europe lies for the most part in the North Temperate Zone, and we can see in this fact one reason why her people have taken a foremost place in the world. The climate is on the whole neither too hot nor too cold for hard work. A small part of the continent lies within the Arctic Circle, and in these lands of the far north not many people are to be found.

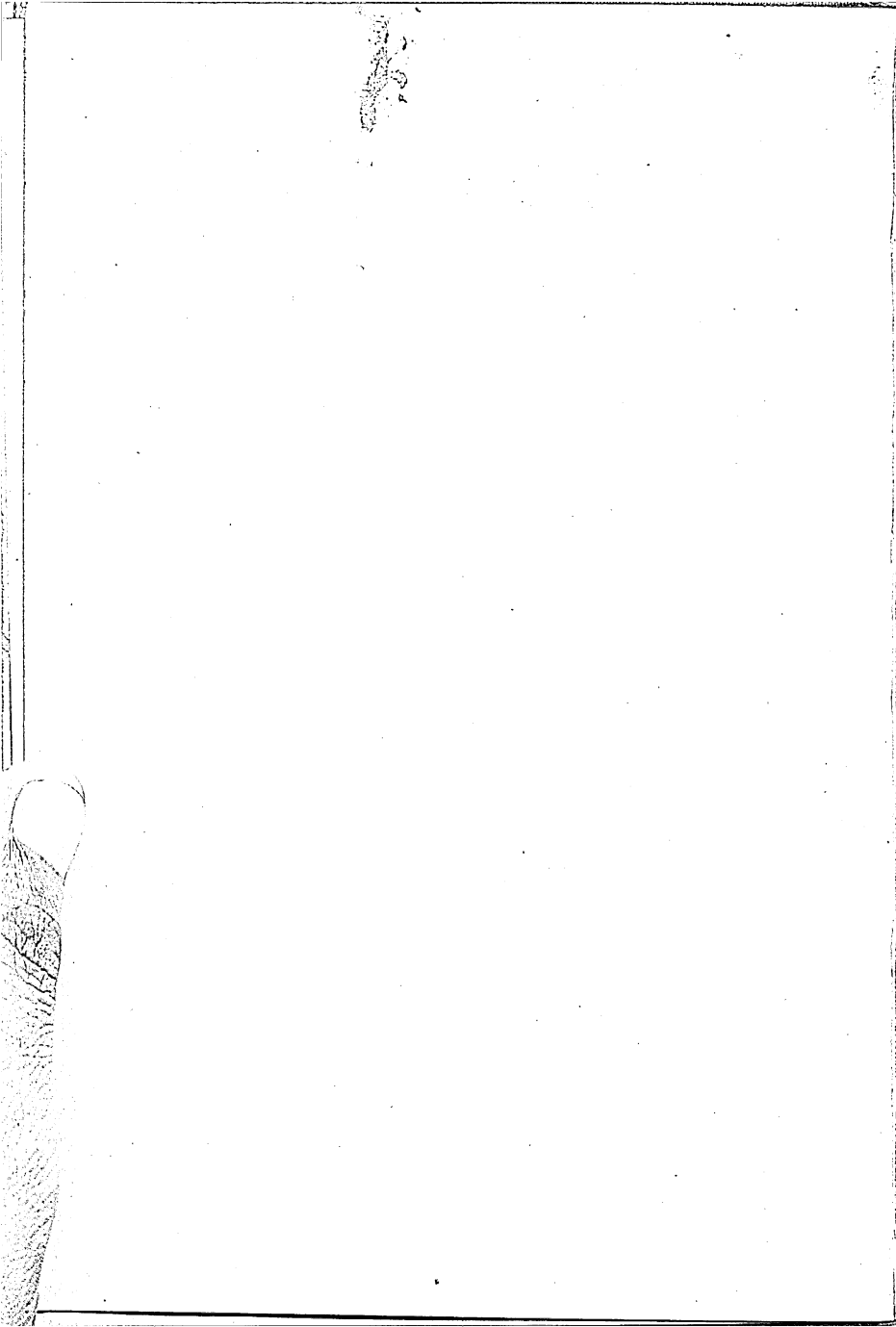
Compared with its size, Europe has a very long coastline, with many enclosed seas, gulfs, bays, islands and peninsulas. The arms of the sea reach far into the land in the western part, and this has the effect of tempering the climate. In the eastern part, where it is possible to get very far from the sea, the cold of winter and the heat of summer are much more severe.

The White Sea to the north of Russia can only be used for navigation for three months in the year, so that it is not very important from a trade point of view. The Baltic Sea is very dangerous, and for nearly half the year its shores are blocked with ice. Ice-breaking steamers have been used in some parts to clear a way for the merchant ships.

The North Sea is for the most part ice-free all the year round, and is one of the busiest trading seas of







the world. Grouped round about it are the leading seafaring nations, and on its shores are some of the greatest of the world's seaports, including London, the greatest of all.

The Mediterranean is another great highway of commerce, and was at one time the chief sea of the world, before Columbus led the way across the Atlantic. It is not merely a European sea, but part of the route to India and the Far East by way of the Suez Canal. There are numbers of good harbours on its shores, but its ports do not rank with those of the North Sea.

The Black Sea and the Sea of Azov are not very important from a trade point of view. They are sometimes blocked with ice, while the former is stormy and has few harbours; and the latter is too shallow for the large trading vessels of our day.

The Adriatic Sea to the east of Italy used to be the busiest part of the Mediterranean, when Venice was one of the chief ports of the world. And the *Ægean*, with its many islands, was once the great highway of Greek trade, as its other name of the Archipelago—*i.e.*, the "chief sea"—reminds us to this day.

The eastern part of the Mediterranean is often spoken of as the *Levant*, and was once the scene of busy trade between the isles of Greece and the ports of Alexandria, in Egypt, and Tyre and Sidon, in the Asian kingdom of Phœnicia. It was from Phœnicia, you may remember, that the merchants came to our islands seeking tin in the earliest years of our history, before the birth of Christ.

2.—Build and Drainage.

In studying the surface of Europe, we must look first for the lowland regions and fertile river plains. Here we shall find the largest number of people, and, therefore, the most trade and activity.

Now, the central part of Europe forms a great plain, drained by a large number of useful rivers. This lowland region begins in England, and then stretches eastward. It takes in the north of France, Holland, and Belgium, and the north of Germany; and it spreads out in Russia from the Black Sea to the White Sea. Upon the western and central parts of this plain are found the chief cities of Europe and the densest population.

The countries of the south of Europe are occupied by a lofty highland system. But there are two important breaks in this system, in each of which we find other large and busy cities.

One of these is the Plain of Lombardy, in the north of Italy, which is drained to the eastward by the River Po; this is the most important part of Italy from a trade point of view. The other is the river plain of the middle Danube, which forms the most productive and populous part of Austria-Hungary.

We see, therefore, that the Great Powers for the most part occupy the plains, or lowland regions. The mountain regions must, however, not be neglected. From the mountains flow the streams which water the fertile plains. The climate of each country of Europe is much affected by the mountain ranges. In the flanks of some of the mountain ranges, too, are found rich stores of minerals, which bring wealth to the plain dwellers.

Besides, the mountain lands have many wonderful tales to tell us when we come to study the way in which the surface of the earth has been formed; and among the lofty mountain ranges, with their snow-clad peaks, their glaciers and forest-clad slopes, we can refresh the eye, gain new stores of health and vigour, and lift our hearts for a time above the business of the plains.

The mountain country of Switzerland has been called "the playground of Europe"; and it is here that we find the highest land of the Continent—the western part of the great central mass of mountains known as the Alps, which extend eastward into that part of Austria known as the Tyrol.

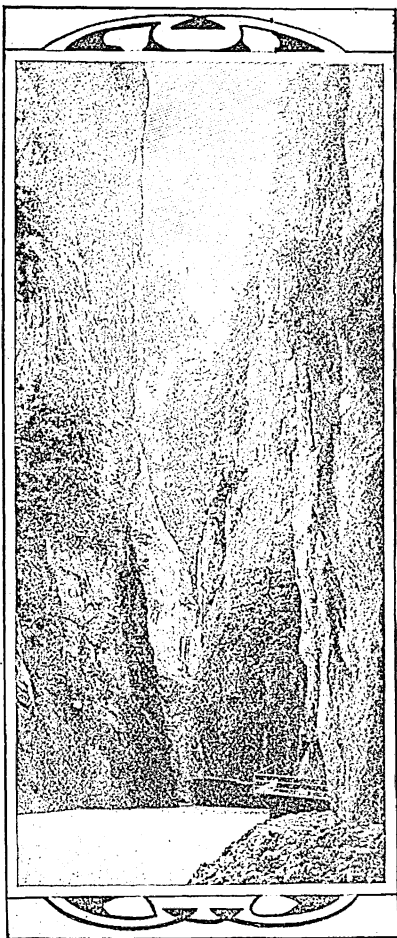


Photo by J. Howard Harris.

THE GORGE OF THE AAR, SWITZERLAND.

From the Alps of Switzerland flow two of the most important rivers of the Continent, the Rhine to the north, the Rhone to the south. The great River Danube, too, comes from this central part of the Continent, though not from the Alpine range.

The upper waters of the Rhine and Rhone are connected with a number of lakes famous all over the world for their beauty. In the upper course of the Rhine is the Lake of Constance; and many of the other lakes of Switzerland are connected with the Aare and the Reuss, which bring their waters to the Rhine. In the course of the Upper Rhone lies the Lake of Geneva; and when the river leaves this lake it is joined by the icy waters of the Arve, which flows from the glaciers of Mont Blanc, the "monarch of the Alps."

In studying the highlands of Europe it is a good plan to start from the Alps as a centre, and trace the other great ranges from it. To the north-east there is a break formed by the valley of the Danube, and then the Carpathian range forms a great curve round the plain of Hungary; and a continuation of this range is known as the Transylvanian Alps.

South-east from the Alpine region run the mountain ranges of the Balkan Peninsula; to the south-west are the Pyrenees and the highlands of Spain; to the south the Apennines of Italy. Thus nearly the whole of Southern Europe is taken up by ranges which seem to branch off from the Alps.

The rivers of the western part of the Central European Plain show how the slope is generally to the north-west from the neighbourhood of the Alps. In the eastern part of the plain the watershed runs from the central part of

the Urals to the Valdai plateau, whence flow most of the longest rivers of Southern Russia, and then southwest to the Carpathians.

Most of the rivers of Europe are navigable, except some of those in Italy and Spain, which are only useful for trade in their lower courses. Thus, as we can see from the map, the Continent is not only well watered in every part, but it has a splendid system of waterways useful for commerce. We can see in this one reason for the commercial greatness of Europe.

There is another highland region in the North-West of Europe. It takes up the western part of the bear-shaped peninsula of Scandinavia, and the mountains come close to the water's edge to form the fiords of Norway. We may consider the highlands of Western Britain and North-Western France as belonging to this system.

We should learn to judge the importance of a river not so much by its length as by the nature of the land through which it passes, and the number of large towns in the country which it drains. It is a good exercise to find out from a map of Europe those rivers which drain the most populous districts, and to remember the names of these streams is better than learning a list of names of the "longest rivers."

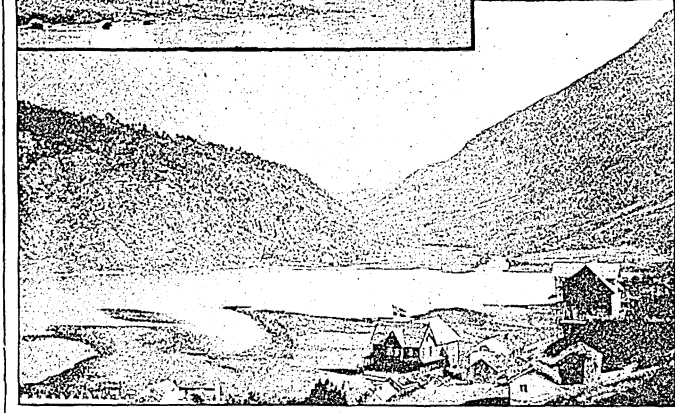
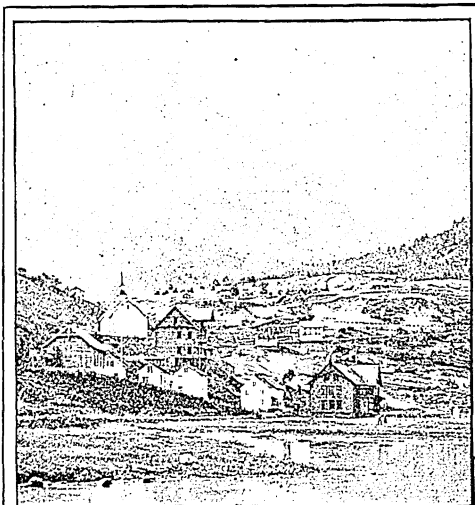
We shall note the nature of the climate of each part of the Continent in later chapters of this book. But it is well here to consider a few things which apply to the Continent as a whole.

Though the climate of Europe is generally temperate, there is a good deal of difference between the North and South. While the northern coasts are ice-bound for

several months of the year, the lands round the Mediterranean have cool and pleasant winters.

The nearness to the sea of almost all parts keeps up the average temperature, but in Central Russia the

climate is more extreme. The western shores also get the benefit of warm, moist, westerly and south-westerly winds from the Atlantic, which also bring warm surface-water from



SCENES IN NORWAY.

those parts of the ocean where the sun is very powerful.

Over the Mediterranean blow warm winds from the North of Africa, known as the mistral in Southern France, the sirocco in Italy, and the solano in Spain. These are very relaxing, and often bring fine sand from the African deserts.

Italy, Spain, and the Balkan Peninsula are protected from cold northerly winds by mountain ranges. The Carpathians protect the Hungarian plain from north-east winds. The higher parts of the Continent are, of course, cooler than the lowlands; hence the coolness of the Swiss summer and the extremes of cold felt on the central plateau of Spain.

The rainfall is generally greater in the west and south than in the north and east, for reasons which may be easily discovered. In the west of the Continent most rain falls in autumn, in the east in summer, in the south in winter.

3.—Divisions and Boundaries.

The best boundary between two countries is some natural feature, such as a range of high mountains, a broad river, a lake, or, best of all, some part of the ocean. The only country of Europe completely cut off from the rest is the United Kingdom.

Note, too, that though the sea severs it from the rest of the Continent, it also makes it easy for us to trade with and visit the countries of Europe; so that the ocean is at once the best barrier and the best link.

After our own island home, the countries of Europe which are most completely cut off from the others are

the three peninsulas of Scandinavia, Italy, and Spain, the boundaries of which might here be noted on the map.

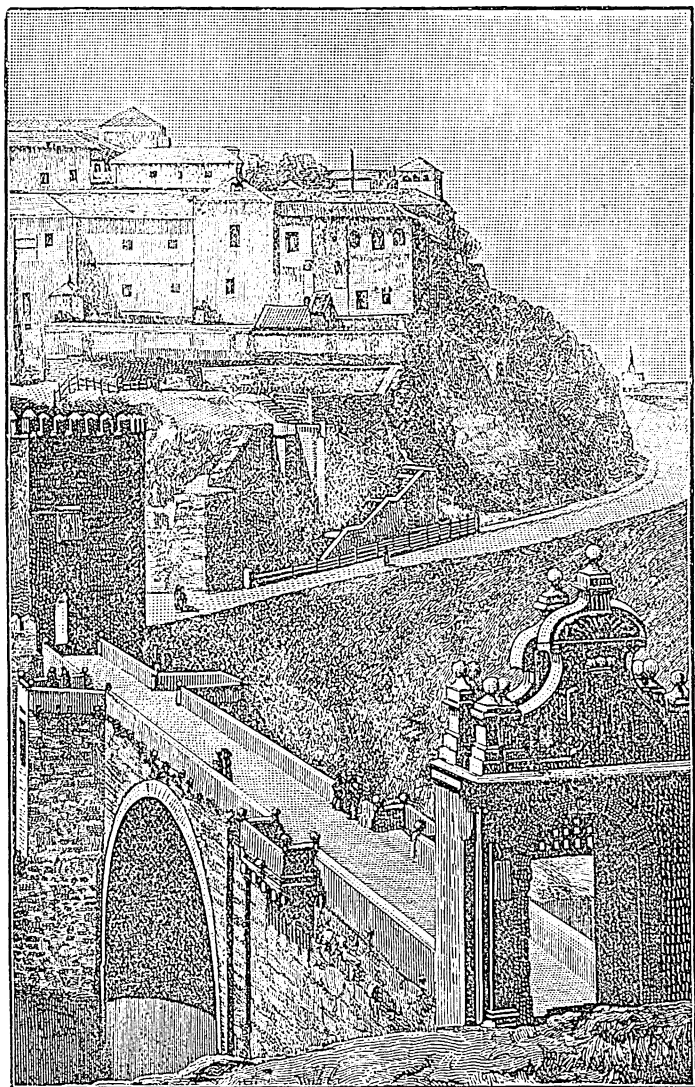
It is interesting to find out on the map the most conspicuous natural features which form part of a boundary between one country and another.

Among the mountain barriers we have the lofty Pyrenees, which have always formed a most complete division between France and Spain; the Alps to the north of Italy; the Vosges Mountains, which help to form the eastern boundary of France; and the three ranges which help to separate Germany from Austria, and are known as the Bohmer Wald (Bohemian Forest), the Erz Gebirge (Ore Mountains), and the Riesen Gebirge (Giant Mountains).

The great rivers of Europe have little to do with the boundaries, and a reason for this ought not to be hard to find. A river is too valuable to form a mere dividing-line, and it is the aim of each nation to keep its rivers to itself if possible from source to mouth. The head waters of the river are, however, not so important a possession as the middle and lower courses.

It is interesting to study the rivers of Europe with this in our minds. Take, for example, the Rhine, and find out for yourselves one of the reasons why some Germans would like to have Holland included in their empire.

Yet there are certain places where a river helps to form a boundary. The lower Danube has a great deal to do with fixing the limits of Roumania and Servia. The Save helps to form the Servian boundary to the north-west. And in the far north of the Continent the Tornea



THE ALCANTARA BRIDGE, TOLEDO (SPAIN).

forms part of the dividing-line between Sweden and Finland, which is part of Russia.

Where there is no natural division between two States the line of separation is called an artificial boundary. It is shown on the map by a dotted line; in reality it usually consists of a line of posts set up at equal distances apart and inscribed on opposite sides with the names of the adjoining countries.

But there will, as a rule, be nothing to prevent you from stepping from one country to another. "Gentlemen, we are now in Switzerland," cries the conductor of a coach on a road just outside of Geneva; and then, as the coach has rolled past a slender post by the roadside, he cries, "Gentlemen, we are now in France."

But a land frontier is strictly guarded, especially in time of war. And on these European frontiers are to be found some of the strongest fortresses in the world, such as the French towns Lille and Sedan, near the Belgian frontier; in Germany, Metz and Strasburg, near the French boundary; in Belgium, Mons, on the French side; in Austria, Krakow, on the Polish frontier.

Some interesting questions rise to our minds in looking at a map of Europe which shows clearly the different States.

Which is the largest? This is readily answered. Is this country the greatest? you may ask. By no means; but it is rapidly advancing, and has become a Great Power in a comparatively short space of time.

Then, while we are thinking of the sizes of the different States, we may note that, roughly speaking, France, Germany, Austria-Hungary, and the Spanish peninsula have about the same area, and are each about twice the

size of Italy or our own country. Note also what have been called the "little peoples" of Western Europe: Denmark, Holland, Belgium and Switzerland—all about the same size, all very interesting in many ways, but not ranked among the Great Powers.

Which countries have the best position for conducting a world-wide trade—that is to say, which can most easily send goods to all parts of Europe and to the other continents? Remember that land carriage costs about twenty times as much as transit by sea.

What great disadvantage has Russia in the race for the world's trade? Remember, in finding out an answer to this question, what we learnt about the seas on her shores in our first chapter.

How much of the sea-board of Germany is on the open North Sea? Which small countries would she have to

absorb if she wished to improve her position in this respect?

A YOUNG LADY OF SPAIN.



CHAPTER II.—BRITAIN AS A WORLD POWER.

1.—The Building of the British Empire.

WE have already studied the physical features of our home islands* and seen what effect they have on the life and work of the British people. We know, too, something about the lands all over the world which form the British Empire. Now let us consider for a short time how Britain became a World Power, and what position she holds among the other foremost nations.

We shall do well to remember that, though our country is now very powerful among the nations, she has not always been in this position. Boys and girls who hear so much of "the Empire on which the sun never sets" are apt to forget that at one time our country was by no means powerful. They must not think that there has always been a great British Empire. As a matter of fact, it was only in the later part of our history that we began to expand beyond our sea-girt borders.

We might divide our history into two great periods, before Elizabeth and after Elizabeth. In the first period we were busy settling two questions at one and the same time. The first was, How can the people of these islands, English, Welsh, Scots and Irish, settle down and live peaceably together? The second was, Is Britain to possess land on the continent of Europe and take her share in the frequent struggles to settle the boundaries of the States of that continent?

History gives us the answers to these two questions.

* Book III. of this series deals with England and Wales; Book IV. with the British Isles and Empire.

We can watch the gradual coming together of England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland during this first period of our history. Not without wars and much bloodshed, it is true. But when Elizabeth died, and the Scottish King James became also King of England, the matter had been as good as settled. These islands were henceforth to form one nation under one sovereign, and the people of England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland were to do their work in the world side by side.

By the time of Elizabeth the second great question had also been settled. It was during the time of Queen Mary, who reigned before Elizabeth, that we lost Calais, the last piece of our French territory, which at one time had been very extensive. Sovereigns of Britain were still for a long time to call themselves Kings or Queens of France; but this was now a mere empty form. Britain's place in the world was not among the continental States of Europe. We see her drawing apart behind her ocean boundary and preparing to use her energies in other directions.

About sixty-six years before Elizabeth came to the throne Christopher Columbus made his famous voyage across the Atlantic, and opened the way to the New World. This voyage had a great effect upon the course of our national life. Before the time of Columbus we stood on the outer ring of the nations. The discovery of America placed us in the centre of the world, and showed us that our work in the world was to be wider than that of a mere European State.

We can date the beginning of our oversea Empire, then, from about the time of Queen Elizabeth—that is, three hundred years ago. And the second great

period of our history is largely concerned with the question, which country was to be first in the New World.

For when the bold sailors of Queen Elizabeth's time began to sail to America in search of treasure and lands in which they might found colonies, they had to reckon with Spain, which was then the greatest Power in the world. Travellers from this great country had followed closely on the heels of Columbus, and opened up the rich treasure lands of Central and South America; and Spain was firmly settled in the New World before we turned our thoughts Westward-ho.

Spain determined to crush the islanders who dared to dispute her power in the new lands across the ocean. And for this reason more than any other the great Armada was sent to our shores. How this "great fleet invincible" was beaten and driven homeward, shattered and disgraced, our history books do not forget to tell us. We may date from this great victory the settlement of our claim to have a footing in the New World in spite of Spain.

The great power of Spain declined, but the way was not yet clear for the founding of our Empire. Holland, now one of the "little peoples," was then a great seafaring nation. And France became, after the fall of Spain, the greatest Power in Europe. With these two nations we had to reckon, and the reckoning was long and costly both in lives and treasure.

With France we contested for a hold on North America, and after Wolfe fought the Battle of Quebec this great struggle was settled. France also had a great desire to establish herself in India, but Robert Clive

checked the progress of her great leader, Dupleix, and founded our Indian Empire.

With Holland we struggled for trade in the West Indies and the East Indies, and we ended by planting ourselves firmly in both these quarters of the world. And in time, too, we won from the Dutch nation the territory at the Cape of Good Hope, which has since extended right to the heart of Africa.

It was from Holland that sailors set out to explore the southern seas; and Australia was long known as New Holland, though the Dutch did not settle in it. This great land, too, in time became British, and is now the home of a new nation of our countrymen. There was no fighting over the island continent; by this time our position was secure enough to allow us to make our settlements undisturbed. The great wars of the latter period of our history are very confusing and hard to study. But they become easier when we remember that the chief question that had to be settled was, which of the leading nations of Europe was to be first in the new lands beyond the sea.

There was one great check in this work of Empire-building which we must not forget to notice. This was the great War of American Independence, which ended in the loss of our American colonies and the birth of a new nation, the United States of America. This happened about one hundred and fifty years ago; and to-day, as we know, the United States, a young nation beside those of Europe, has a foremost place among the World Powers.

It was not mere greed for land and treasure which moved us to fight and struggle for a world-wide Empire and a world-wide trade. We have a small country with

rich mineral wealth ; we therefore need room for our sons to found new homes and lands beyond the sea which can supply us with raw material for our factories and with food for our workers. For these reasons our Empire was founded, though the matter may perhaps not have been quite clear to those who did the work ; and for these reasons it is important that we should remain a great world Power, and do all we can to keep the parts of our Empire together.

2.—The Britain of To-day.

The World Power which we call Britain consists of a number of British States in various parts of the world, and not merely of a group of islands to the north-west of Europe.

There is, first, the Mother Country ; then a group of daughter nations—Canada, South Africa, Australia, and New Zealand ; then the great Indian Empire, which is ruled by British officials ; and lastly, a number of territories in various parts of the world useful to us for trade and for the establishment of naval and military stations which might be of great importance in time of war.

Ours is a scattered Empire, encircling the globe, but the divisions are not so far apart as they were at one time. Swift trading and passenger vessels are constantly passing to and fro between the various ports. Telegraph cables unite them all with the Mother Country, and London, the centre of the Empire, receives speedy news of all that is going on in British lands beyond the sea. So that in a very real sense the British Empire is a unity almost as complete as if its parts lay side by side, like those of the Empire of Germany or Russia.

It is a peaceful Empire, but it has many interests to guard, and it must be prepared for war. The Mother Country draws most of its supplies of food from across the seas; and therefore its fighting power is not so much in its army as in its great navy, which is by far the strongest in the world.

The ships of the British navy are distributed all over the world, the entire ocean being mapped out into sections known as stations. There is the Mediterranean Station, of which Gibraltar and Malta are the chief harbours; then there is the Channel Squadron, which has Portsmouth, Devonport, and Chatham as its home ports.

In more distant seas we have the China Station, off the eastern shores of Asia and near Japan; the Cape Station, which includes not only South Africa, but also the west and east coasts of that continent; the Australian Station, which also takes in New Zealand; the East Indian Station, with its chief port at Bombay; the Pacific Station, with its headquarters at Esquimaux, in British Columbia; and the North American Station, reaching from Nova Scotia to the West Indies.

The whole of our Empire, therefore, is under the guardianship of our great fleet of men-of-war, cruisers, and torpedo vessels; and these ships are ready to go off at a moment's notice to any spot where their services may be required.

Ours is a trading Empire, and its chief concern is commerce. It has built up a great trade all over the world, and owns a splendid fleet of merchant vessels. These not only carry goods between different parts of the Empire; many of them are carriers trading between

foreign ports, and a great deal of our wealth has been won in this way.

Among the Great Powers Britain stands first for trade. Her chief rivals are Germany and the United States. She is not now so far ahead of these nations as she was at one time. Some people say that one reason for this is that the young people of these two countries are better educated than our own. If this be so, each of the readers of this book can do his or her share in putting the matter right.

Ours is an extensive Empire, as we have seen, but there is no desire to make it more extensive. Britons are not thirsting for new lands to conquer; they are busy enough in looking after those which have been already gained, in making them fit homes for British people, and in finding new markets for their trade.

About one-fourth of Britain's great trade is carried on with other parts of the Empire, chiefly India, Australia, and Canada.

Some of the other world Powers have lands which lie beyond their own European borders, and in later chapters of this book we shall see where these lands lie. A large part of the continent of Africa has in recent years been portioned out among the three Great Powers—Britain, Germany, and France. But we must note that the chief idea of the British has been to secure those parts where the climate is suitable for white settlement. The parts belonging to Germany and France do not provide homes for numbers of people from those countries, but trading-places from which foodstuffs and other useful products may be obtained.

Great Britain has no land frontiers like France and



A GROUP OF SOUTH AFRICAN LABOURERS.

Germany, and Austria, which, in case of war, would have to be guarded by a large army of soldiers. But there are extensive land frontiers to some of the other parts of the Empire; and it is both interesting and instructive to

find out on a map of the world which of the Great Powers are neighbours to British States beyond the seas.

Take Asia first. Russia comes very close to our Indian Empire, and it is not surprising that we find it necessary to make our power as great as possible in the Afghan State, and to keep the ruler of that country friendly to us. To the east of India the independent State of Siam lies between our territory and that of the French; but Siam is not a very strong and powerful country, and some day, perhaps, our boundary may run with that of France.

Turn next to Africa. Here in several places the Germans are our neighbours, and in other places the Portuguese, who once had a high position as a sea-faring and colonizing nation. The great Congo State in the middle of Africa is ruled by the King of the Belgians, and we see how this State and German East Africa bar the way if we wish to have the Cape to Cairo Railway lying in lands entirely under the control of Great Britain.

In North America the United States is our neighbour both on the south and north-west of Canada. The boundary between Alaska and Canada was for a long time in dispute, but in 1903 it was settled by arbitration.

CHAPTER III.—THE FRENCH REPUBLIC

1.—A General Survey.

THE reader is asked to study this chapter about France always with the help of a map. It is better to have a map of Europe, or at least of Western Europe, than to use one which shows the country by itself.

France has three sea-boards. One faces Britain, and, at Calais, comes within twenty-two miles of the shore of that country. The west coast faces the open Atlantic and the great trading countries of the New World. The Mediterranean sea-board gives access to the trade of the eastern part of the Mediterranean; and from this part ships can sail for the Far East without having to cross the stormy Bay of Biscay, as British vessels have to do.

When we consider these things, and know, too, that France has a fertile soil, an intelligent and energetic people, and many good harbours, we see at once why this country has become a great trading nation.

From Spain she is cut off by the lofty range of the Pyrenees, from Italy by a portion of the great Alpine range, from Switzerland by the Jura Mountains. But these great natural barriers are pierced or crossed by railways, the railroad from France into Italy passing through the Mont Cenis tunnel, which is seven and a half miles long.

Her German and Belgian frontiers are for the most part artificial, and are protected by lines of strong fortresses. With each of these two neighbours France has very good railway communication.

The surface of the country divides naturally into

three parts. In the North and West there is a lowland region, rising higher, however, in Brittany and Normandy, and drained by the Garonne, the Loire, and the Seine.

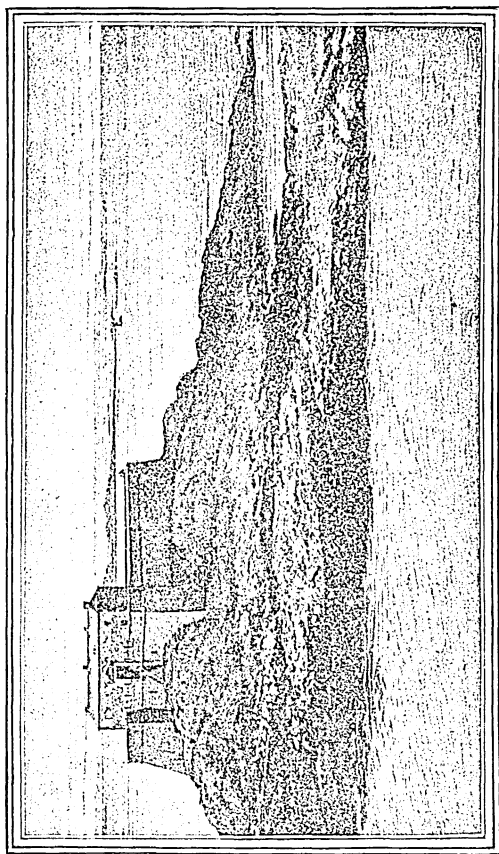
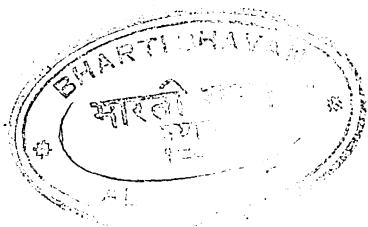
Round the Gulf of Lyons is the coastal plain of Languedoc. The rest of the country is taken up by a high plateau, which is cut off from the western part of the Alps by the north to south valley of the Saone and Rhone.

The rivers of France form very good waterways for trading purposes, and many of them have been improved in this respect. There are also a large number of canals in various parts of the country, so that the whole land is covered with a close network of water-ways.

Many parts of France are very beautiful. Normandy is remarkable for swelling hills waving with corn, beautiful valleys abounding in orchards, and rich pastures, on which large herds of cattle are reared, crossed by winding rivers. Here, too, are venerable cities, noble cathedrals, with abbeys and churches not only in the larger towns, but scattered over the country so that every village, in some parts, has a fine building.

Brittany, too, has its beauty, but of a sterner kind, like parts of Western Britain. "All through my Breton journey," writes a traveller, "I find myself saying, 'How like Wales! How like Cornwall!'—so greatly does La Petite Bretagne resemble La Grande! Wild sweeps of heath with low-lying pastures, herds of little black and white Breton cows, quaint stone windmills, low-thatched, one-storied cottages, pine-woods, pools and marshes, and lastly, the sea."

In the Auvergne country, west of the Rhone, there are



ON THE COAST OF BRITTANY.

numerous extinct volcanoes. Many of the hills have a crater-like form; and it is possible in this district to trace broad streams of lava now hardened and covered over with soil sloping down from the broken edge of the crater, from which the molten rock in past ages rushed in fiery flood.

The Landes is the name given to a district in the South-West of France, where there are many wide sandy tracts and marshes. In order to get about quickly over these plains the people long ago adopted the plan of walking on stilts, carrying a pole, to be used as a walking-stick or as a support when they wished to rest.

It was at one time a common sight to see these peasants, both men and women, moving about at great speed, or resting on their poles watching their flocks of sheep. Many of the marshes have, however, been drained and roads have been made, and this mode of getting about is not so common.

The climate of France is generally warmer than our own, but that of the South much more so. The south-eastern corner, called Provence, has been called "the garden of Europe," and here many rich people from more northern countries spend the winter in towns such as Nice and Cannes on the Mediterranean coast.

The sea and sky are deep blue, the air clear and cool, the landscape green and fresh. Most of the plants are evergreens. The slopes of the hills are planted with olives, while both the vine and the mulberry, the tree on which the silkworm is fed, grow well and abundantly. Roses and other sweet-smelling flowers abound, and the orange- and lemon-tree, as well as the date-palm, are common features of the landscape.

"To sit among oranges, olives and palms," writes a visitor, "and yet look up from one's seat under one's own vine and fig-tree, to see the snow-clad Alps growing pink in the sunset, is a combination of delights nowhere else to be met with in Europe."

To the south of France stretches the lofty chain of the Pyrenees, which forms such a well-defined barrier between this country and Spain. They stand "like a vast wall stretching from sea to sea, notched by frequent passes or cols. Only four can be crossed by carriage, but at least fifty are known to shepherds and mountaineers. They are called ports, a very expressive term, for they are really doors leading from France into Spain."

One of these passes is called the Brèche de Roland, which was opened out, the legend tells us, by Roland, the great warrior of Charlemagne, striking the rock with his golden-hilted sword, Durendal.

2.—Occupations and Towns.

The population of France is about one-twentieth less than that of the United Kingdom. Of the total number of French people, about one-sixteenth live in Paris.

The chief occupation of the French people is agriculture, and half of the people work on the land. But France is not merely a farming country. She has good coal, iron and other minerals, and many large and busy manufacturing towns. She is, unlike our own country, to a great extent self-supporting, and does not look across the seas for most of the necessities of life.

Many of the peasants own the land which they till, and by French law each piece of land on the death of the

owner is divided among his sons. More wheat is grown in France than in any other country of Europe, and this is the chief crop on the farms. Yet the French, being very fond of white bread, import a large quantity of wheat from Russia and the United States.

In some parts of the country the peasants at early dawn go in procession, headed by priests in white robes, to bless the fields and orchards in the spring-time. As they go the priests chant hymns and offer prayers for a rich harvest of fruit and grain.

France produces a great quantity of wine from the grapes grown chiefly in the valleys of the Rhone, the Garonne, the Loire, and the Marne, a tributary of the Seine. The grapes are gathered in the autumn, when all the people of the villages, young and old, reap the harvest of grapes from the vineyards. The vines are grown on supports standing about four feet above the ground and a few feet apart.

The French peasant is very thrifty, and, as a rule, the space between vine and vine is not wasted. Where he cannot plant a fruit-tree he will have a currant-bush, or asparagus, or artichokes. We find the same care and objection to waste in many French orchards, the space between the fruit-trees being planted with grain. "It would be difficult to say," writes a visitor to a farm in Normandy, "whether there was an orchard sown with wheat or a wheatfield planted with apple-trees."

Bordeaux, near the mouth of the Garonne, is the centre and distributing port of one of the richest wine districts of the world, which produces a great quantity of claret. The sparkling wine known as champagne comes from the North-East. At Epernay, near the



NORMANDY GLEANERS.

cathedral city of Rheims, there are large cellars or caves where millions of bottles of this wine are stored, each bottle being kept three years before being sent out. The

wine known as Burgundy comes from the east of France, where, on the Golden Slopes (Côtes d'Or), are many wide and fruitful vineyards.

An important French crop is that of the beet-root, from which sugar is largely made. This manufacture was begun during the wars in which France was engaged in the time of Napoleon, when it was not easy to get cane-sugar across the seas from the French West Indies.

Normandy and Brittany have large numbers of dairy farms, and Brittany butter is well known in the English market. Cattle-rearing goes on in most parts of the country; so that the French wisely make a great deal of the fertile soil and rich pasture lands of their native country.

The coal measures of France occur in the North-East, in the basin of the Loire, and near the junction of the Rhone and Saone. The amount raised is, however, only about one-ninth of that got from the mines of Britain, and coal is imported from that country as well as from Belgium and Germany.

The manufacturing towns are usually found on or near the coal-fields. In the North-East the triangle formed by lines joining the three towns, Lille, Rouen, and Rheims, encloses a busy district where machinery, as well as woollen, cotton, and linen goods are made. Rheims is also famous for its splendid cathedral, in which King Charles VII. of France received the crown which was won for him by the heroism of Joan, the Maid of Orleans. Rouen, too, has memories of the heroine of France, for it was in the public square of this city that she suffered death at the stake.



JOAN OF ARC AT ORLEANS.—W. ETTY, R.A.

Lyons and St. Etienne are the chief industrial centres on the south-eastern coal-field. Both manufacture silk, and the iron manufactures of the latter has won for it the name of the "Birmingham of France." Tours, in the Loire basin, and Toulouse, on the Garonne, are also busy cities, the former noted for its silk, the latter for its swords and other weapons.

But the greatest of all is Paris, on the Seine, which is thought by many to be the most beautiful city in the world. It is an ancient city, and most of the history of France centres about it. All roads and railways lead to Paris, and it is the centre of social and fashionable life, a city of brightness, and gaiety, and pleasure. But it is also a busy manufacturing centre, famous for its jewellery, fine silk, and other fabrics, its glass, pottery, and works of art. It has a university, which claims to be the most ancient in the world, and it is a world-renowned centre for the artist and the sculptor.

The chief goods sent out from the ports of France are wines, silks, leather goods, fancy articles, eggs and dairy produce. Most of these go to the United Kingdom, and the chief French port on the English Channel is le Havre, at the mouth of the Seine. Bordeaux is the leading port on the west coast, and Marseilles on the south. A French writer thus describes the last-named port: "It is a harbour enclosed by naked rocks, without water or trees, its only beauty the sparkling blue of the sea and the hard lines of the mountains bathed in light. Within, it is an ant-heap, full of life and amusement—splendid mansions and cafés, luxurious carriages drawn by fine, high-mettled horses. At night a score of broad boulevards, lined with plane-trees and embellished

with fountains and brightly lighted, are filled with a densely-packed crowd, talking and gesticulating among pleasure halls and open theatres."

The French ports receive chiefly raw materials for the factories—coal, wheat, timber, and hides. From her West African possessions this country gets such tropical produce as palm-oil, gold-dust, ivory, cotton, and rubber. From North Africa, where France also has possessions (see page 67), she gets sponges, tobacco, and fruits of various kinds. From French Indo-China in the South-East of Asia large quantities of rice are exported.

3.—A Glance at French History.

France is now a republic with a Parliament formed of two houses, or chambers. The lower house is known as the Chamber of Deputies, the upper house as the Senate. At the head of the State is the President of the Republic, who is elected for seven years by the votes of deputies and senators. The members of the Chamber of Deputies are the representatives of the people, and each citizen of full age who has lived for six months or more in any one town or district has a vote.

France has a long and varied history and a roll of famous men and women as great and glorious as our own. Let us glance for a moment at her story, and select a few of the names and events worth noting.

In the earliest days France was known to the Romans as part of a larger country called Gaul, and was peopled by Celts. The country, like our own, was conquered by Rome, and afterwards—like our own, too, overrun by

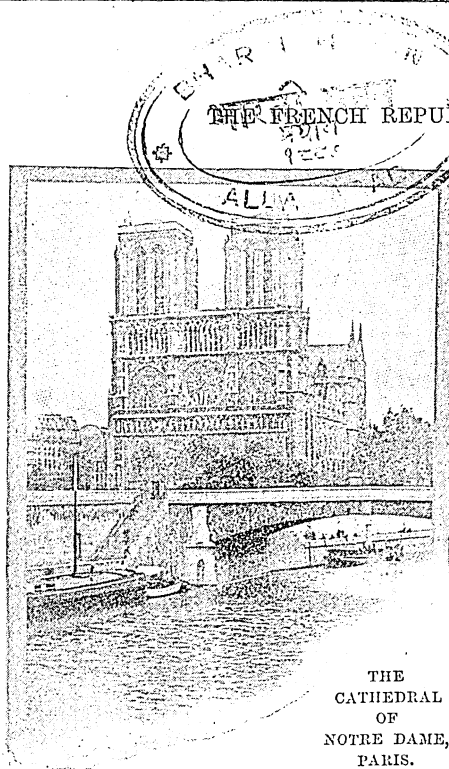
German tribes, one of which, the Franks, subdued the others, and in time gave their name to the country.

Of the Frankish rulers, by far the greatest was the great Emperor Charlemagne, who ruled almost the whole of Western Europe. The French have many wonderful songs and legends about this great monarch and his brave warriors or paladins, among whom the most famous were Roland and Oliver, who fell at the fight of Roncesvalles, in the Pyrenees, near the Brèche de Roland, which has already been mentioned.

After the death of Charlemagne France broke away from the Empire which he left behind, and part of the north of the country passed into the power of Hugh Capet, the first French King. His name was probably given him because of the cape or cap which he wore over his head like a monk, for it is said that he refused to wear a crown.

Hugh Capet ruled only the land round about Paris, and had very little control over the rest of the country, which was ruled by great nobles like that Duke of Normandy who conquered England. But from his time we can watch the gradual coming together of the various parts to form one kingdom. Normandy, Toulouse, Gascony, Aquitaine, Burgundy and Brittany each in turn became subject to the kings who held their Court at Paris; so that in a very real sense this city was the beginning of France.

Hugh Capet became the ancestor of a long line of French kings, reaching down to the nineteenth century. One of the earlier Kings was Louis IX., who was "the most eminent pattern of uprightness and Christian goodness that ever held the sceptre in any country." He



THE
CATHEDRAL
OF
NOTRE DAME,
PARIS.

went on the Eighth Crusade to the Holy Land, and died on the way. With this expedition went also the English prince who afterwards became our Edward I.

During the time of Edward III. there began the Hundred Years' War between France and England. To the earlier part of this great struggle

belong the great battles of Crecy and Agincourt and the brave deeds of the Black Prince and Henry V. of England. There were as brave fighters, however, on the French side, among whom we can only mention Sir Bertrand du Guesclin, a knight of Brittany who became Constable of France, with chief command of the forces.

Then came Joan, the peasant girl of Domrémy, who raised the siege of Orleans, which was invested by the English, and won herself an everlasting name. In the cathedral at Rheims she stood by the altar while the Dauphin Charles was crowned as King of France. Then she wished, but was not allowed, to go back to her sheep; and her splendid and piteous story ended in the

"smoke of devouring fire" in the market-square of Rouen.

The beautiful Mary Queen of Scots was Queen of France for a few short months, having married the prince who became Francis II. In the reign of his successor took place the fearful massacre of St. Bartholomew, when the French Protestants were butchered by the Catholics. Many Huguenots, as the Protestants were called by their enemies, fled to England and became peaceful and industrious citizens of our country.

France became the chief Power in Europe under Louis XIV., who was called the Grand Monarch. This King wished to rule over the whole of Western Europe and to found a colonial empire in America. His great enemy was William III. of England, and the wars fought by these two monarchs take up a great deal of the history of Europe of their time. He failed in both his great plans, this splendid monarch of France. The English King and our great general, Marlborough, defeated his armies in Europe; and though a "New France" was founded in North America, it fell before long into the hands of the English.

The next great landmark in French history is the Revolution, which began about 1790, when the people rose against King Louis XVI. and his nobles. The King, his Queen, and large numbers of the first people in the land were put to death; and what is known as the Reign of Terror began, when the streets of Paris ran with blood, and no one knew who was ruler in the land.

Then there arose a strong man, Napoleon Bonaparte, who made himself Emperor of the French, and aspired

to become master of Europe. In a short time almost the whole of Western Europe lay at his feet. He meant to invade England, and made medals bearing the inscription, "Struck at London, 1804." But Nelson spoiled his plans, and at Trafalgar dealt the first great blow at his power. And at last he was finally crushed on the field of Waterloo by the Duke of Wellington, whom Tennyson calls the "great world-victor's victor."

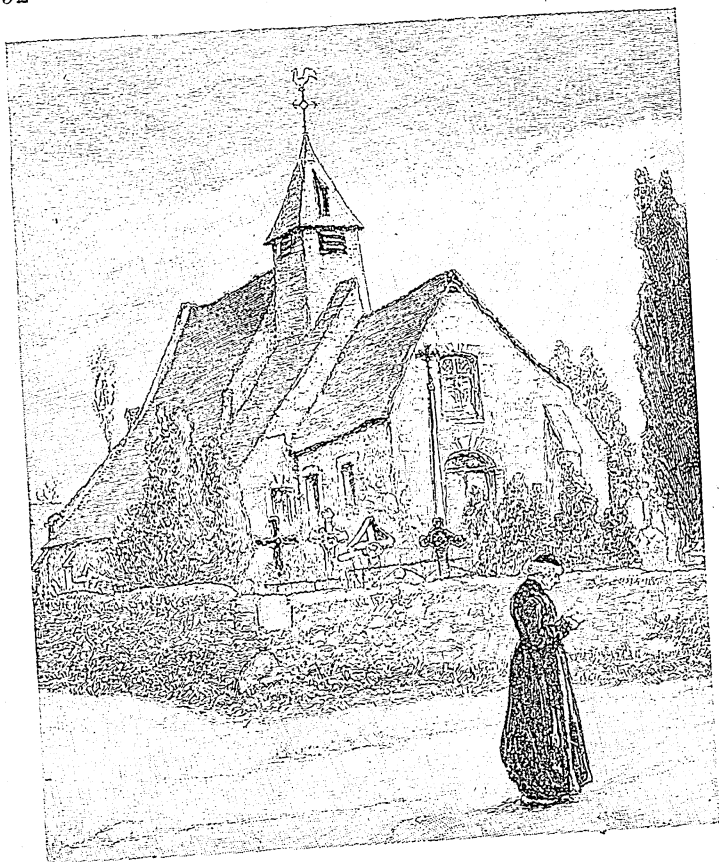
Since the time of Napoleon, who was not only a great general, but a great ruler, France has been in turn a kingdom, a republic, an empire (under Napoleon III., nephew to the first French Emperor), and is now once more a republic.

4.—French People and their Ways—I.

France, with her marked natural boundaries—the English Channel, the Atlantic Ocean, the Pyrenees, the Alps, and the Mediterranean—is composed, notwithstanding, of a number of what were once independent States.

The France of the early Capetian kings—originally the Duchy of France—did not include Normandy, nor extend southwards beyond the banks of the Loire. Brittany, Burgundy, Provence, etc., ruled each by its own duke, had each distinct laws, customs, costumes; each its different language or dialect; each its own people distinct in character and temperament.

Traces of this individuality are strong even to-day. Customs, costumes, speech, food, differ still in many respects in the different parts of France. But in spite of such differences, there are certain marked features of



A VILLAGE CHURCH IN NORMANDY.

French life and character which are common to the nation as a whole, both in town and country.

Family life in France is generally closer, more intimate, less independent, than in the British Isles. French women are usually devoted mothers, love to "occupy

themselves," as the phrase is, with their children, boys and girls alike. A big lad will rush in to kiss his mother on returning from school, will tell her where he is going for his walk, ask her permission and advice, and allow her to attend to his toilette, in a way the British boy would not consider quite manly.

An English boy takes upon himself as early as possible to protect his mother; the French mother protects her son as long as she can. Members of a family hold together and support each other, often hold a "family council" before taking any important step, and are what the Scotch term "clannish."

A French girl, even among the middle classes, does not go about alone more than is absolutely necessary; the young girl of the upper classes never crosses the street without a chaperon; she does not read the newspapers nor books not especially suited for her.

It behoves every woman of the middle classes to be a *femme d'intérieur*—i.e., a good housewife. A woman of the higher social circles, under reverse of fortune, can always turn her hand to domestic duties, and does it usually with cheerful alacrity. From the poorest to the highest almost every woman can cook, and be her own dress-maker and milliner if need be.

The men can often cook, too. If his womenfolk fail him, a Frenchman need not go without his dinner. He can prepare it himself, at a pinch, very well and very cheaply. It is wonderful what a few vegetables, a little milk and butter, and an egg or two can be made to produce in the way of table dainties.

The Frenchman never dines without soup. A meal may be ever so solid and abundant; but if soup is not

served (you *may* decline to take any), you have not dined, be the repast at eleven in the morning or at eight at night. Dinner, with its soup, is usually in the evening, among all classes except the very poor and the peasantry, for children as well as grown-up people.

The meat soup is the produce of that national institution, the *pot-au-feu*. This is an earthen stew-pan or pot, where the meat—part of a round of beef usually, placed in cold water, and surrounded by onions, carrots, and leeks—is set to stew for many hours. The *bouillon*, or broth, thus produced is very good indeed the first day. Used as stock and thickened, it grows weaker and weaker through the week, till it is considered to have done its duty, and the “pot” is set to make a fresh supply.

The *pot-au-feu* of the poor is often made without meat—a few bones at best. King Henry IV., who loved his people, said he wished that every peasant could have a fowl in his *pot-au-feu*. In the country little butcher's meat is eaten and fowls are plentiful. On the first day of the *pot-au-feu* the beef or fowl, surrounded by its vegetables, is served as a separate course. It is rather tough, and the vegetables have lost their savour—given it to the *bouillon*—but both meat and vegetables are greatly relished all the same.

The British breakfast-table is unknown. The morning meal, the *little breakfast*, consists of a cup of chocolate, coffee, or a bowl of milk or of weak broth, and a roll or hunch of bread, with or without butter. This is taken in one's room, or wherever one may happen to be, standing or sitting, in bed, or up and dressed. In board-

ing schools the pupils meet at a common table. But the repast is always short and informal.

French bread is very different from English. It is eaten fresh every day, and is made in a variety of forms, under a variety of names. There are *petits pains*, little breads of all shapes and sizes, none bigger than what are known in Great Britain as French rolls. There are long sticks of bread, crisp and crusty, measuring from a few inches to a yard or more. In some parts these sticks are sold by the *mètre*. The bread is of all qualities, from the coarser household bread to the fine, white bread, short and light and crumbly. An immense quantity of bread is eaten, much more than in England.

The common drink among all classes, for both grown-up people and children, is *vin ordinaire*, wine both red and white, made in the country of home-grown grapes. At table it is never drunk pure. Diluted with water the red wine is termed *abondance*—that is, abundantly-watered wine.

School-life is uniform all over France. The schools are under Government. Education is compulsory and free. The *école communale* answers to our primary school.

Among the richer classes the French boy is taught at home with his sisters by a tutor till he is about nine or ten years of age. Then he dons the gold-buttoned jacket and *képi* of the *collégien*, and goes to a *lycée*. The tunic, worn till lately, has been discarded. The present costume very much resembles that of a naval cadet.

The *lycées* are large Government schools something like our grammar schools. Many of them receive boarders; the greater number of pupils, however, are

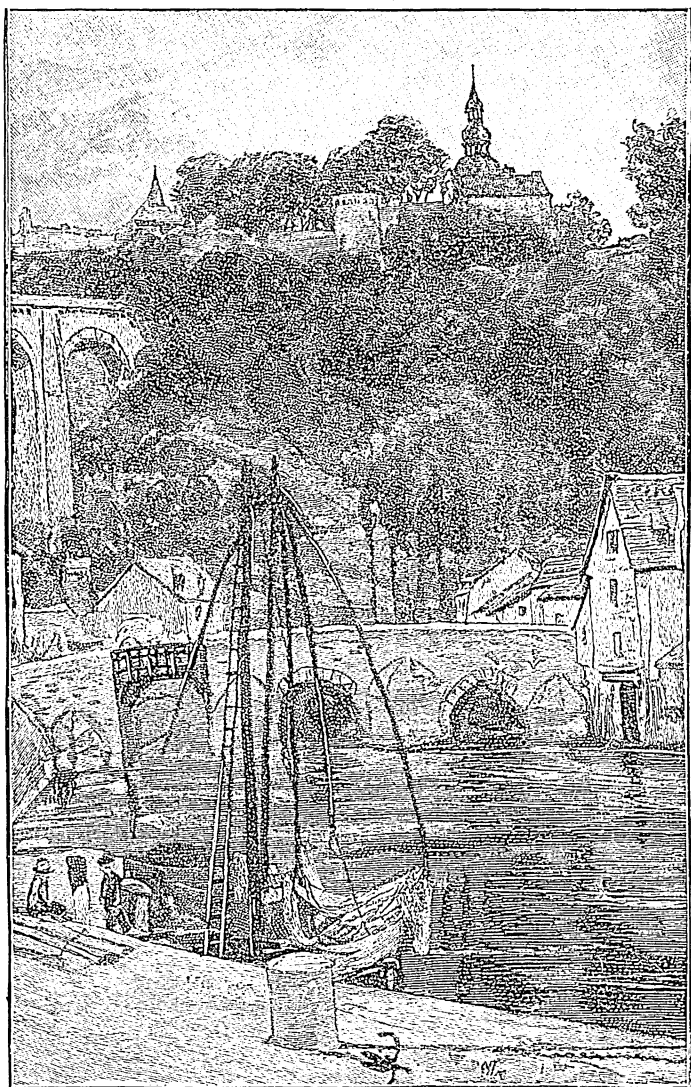
day-scholars living at home or with relatives. There are also private colleges, taught at present by priests. Great public schools like Eton and Harrow, etc., are unknown.

The chief centres of school-life for girls hitherto have been the convents. Girls' *lycées*, resembling to some extent our high schools, established by Government, are becoming more and more general. Like boys, school-girls wear a costume: usually a well-cut, closely-fitting black frock and cape and simply-trimmed, round hat.

French school holidays, instead of being cut up into three portions, are taken all at once. The school-year lasts from October to July, with only two or three free days at Easter, Christmas and the New Year. During the last week in July villages and country towns are gay with children attired in "Sunday best," wearing wreaths of bright green or gilt laurel leaves, or of pink and white roses, and carrying smartly-bound volumes, on their way from the breaking-up and prize-giving. The laurel crowns are the reward of good school-work, the wreaths of roses of good conduct.

During the two following months one is struck by the absence of children from towns; they are all away in the country or at the seaside. Even the humblest tradesman will manage to send his children away during at least part of the long holidays. With the first week in October, all over France, the streets are again full of costumed, satchelled boys and girls, the pavements betwixt whiles alive with little children at play.

Tops and marbles, balls and hoops, leap-frog and prisoners' bar, are as much in favour in France as in Great Britain. At school and elsewhere football,



DINAN (BRITTANY).

cricket, golf, and tennis, British games—a mild copy—with their British names, are making headway.

The Frenchman does not overdo his sports. He takes his recreation less vigorously than the Briton. He cycles a good deal nowadays, and the richer classes “motor” furiously; but the ordinary Frenchman loves to saunter through the streets, look in at the shop-windows, congregate on the boulevards and at the street-corners, sit about with his friends or his family in the public gardens, or make short excursions in the surrounding neighbourhood.

French universities are not a series of colleges like our Oxford and Cambridge, but large, single buildings where young men go to attend classes, hear lectures and pass examinations. They never reside there.

Girls and women attend classes and lectures and pass examinations in much the same way at the Sorbonne in Paris, an institution founded by the saintly King Louis.

His studies over, every Frenchman is bound to go through a course of military service—three years at present for all who are not preparing for a profession. Medical, law, and clerical students serve one year only. The only son of a widow is free altogether. A law is likely to be passed making the compulsory service two years for all without exception. At St. Cyr, near Versailles, is the great military college for boys intending to enter the army; the naval school is a ship in harbour at Brest. French officers are rarely seen out of uniform—a special permission was until lately required to wear civil clothes. The French love uniforms. The *gendarmes*—i.e., mounted policemen—and other officials are all smartly liveried.

5.—French People and their Ways—II.

The French of to-day, like the Gauls who held the land in the earliest times, are impulsive, excitable, gay, bright, polite, anxious to please, as well as full of resource and courage under reverses.

Their natural gaiety and the desire to please enters into all they do; joined to a keen sense of the artistic, it leaves its stamp upon their handicraft. Their productions are made to charm—flowers, silks, laces, and all that endless variety of wonderful fancy goods known as *articles de Paris*, made from the simplest, most inexpensive materials, but always tasteful and pleasing.

Their furniture is artistic, their architecture graceful. Their music is light, tender, melodious. The best of their literature is rich in musical language, turned to please the ear; their dress has a distinction of its own. The simplest, poor work girl, with the scantiest materials, turns herself out smartly and daintily.

It is this great desire to please that makes a Frenchwoman excel in the art of conversation. She can usually converse with sprightly intelligence on most of the topics of the day. She may be frivolous; she is never dull.

Paris is the one great centre of life and movement for the whole of France. Toward Paris all eyes are turned. This city is the pride of the Parisian, the ambition of the “provincial.”

“You English have no place that is to you what Paris is to us,” it was once remarked. “All England is our Paris, wherever there is British soil,” was the reply. “For your one city we have a kingdom.”

The larger manufacturing towns, Rouen, Lyons,

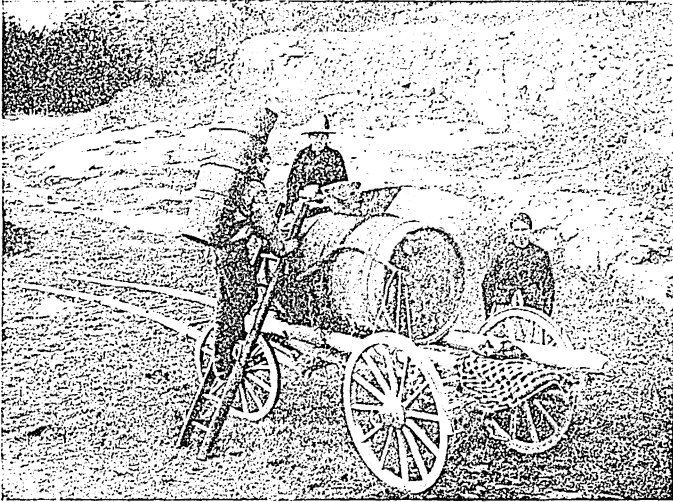
St. Etienne; the great ports, Cherbourg, Brest, Toulon, le Havre; the seaside resorts, Dieppe, Trouville, Nice; the ancient capitals of provinces, Dijon, Orleans, Tours, have all their special points of interest. They are generally rich in historic monuments, but are dull and village-like—provincial, as the saying is—in comparison with Paris.

Yet the French as a people live cheerily and get amusement out of life in whatever part of the country their lot may be cast. The health resorts brighten up in their respective seasons. In the smaller towns the lawyer, the doctor, the schoolmaster, will each throw himself heart and soul into the interests around him and live gay and contented.

All rich Parisians have their *château* or their *maison de campagne* (country house) in some part of the provinces. There they pass the summer, or part of it. The well-to-do have fairly large properties, bought or inherited; but as the right of the first-born is not recognised in France, as lands and fortunes are divided equally among the children, few great estates exist.

The country is cut up into small properties; great names are linked to small means. The impoverished noble will cheerfully farm his poor lands, make the most of his produce, live content in his broken-down *château* among his rarely-mown lawns, his rank shrubberies, happy if he can spend part of the year in his beloved Paris.

The country shopkeeper will sell at small profits, make the most of his opportunities, live sparingly, save up anxiously to dower and marry his daughters, to set up his sons in business, or maybe send them to make



A MODE OF GATHERING THE VINTAGE.

their way in the great city, the centre of success or failure, Paris.

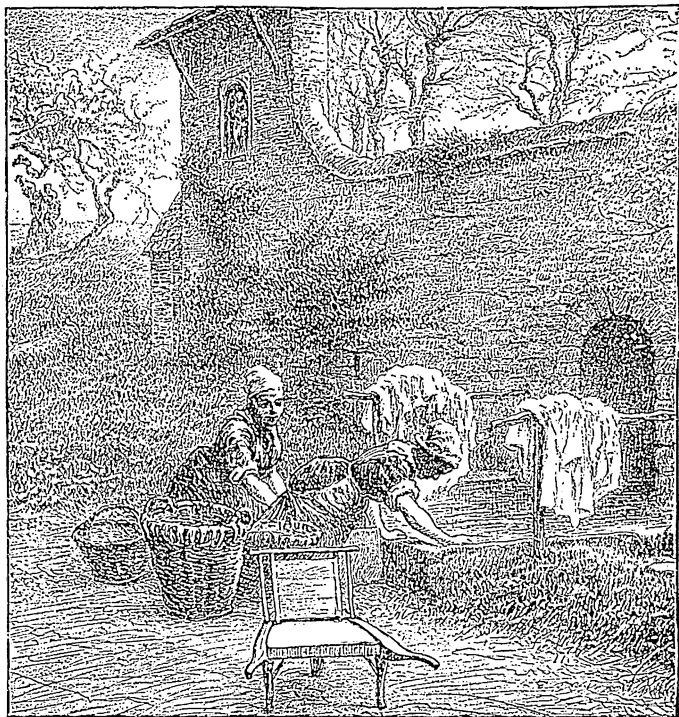
The peasants toil cheerfully upon small earnings, proud of the morsel of ground most of them possess, and whereon they cultivate a few grapes or their varied salads and vegetables. Their cottages are poor and insanitary; that does not trouble them. They live much out of doors. They are always thrifty; to put money by is the aim of every well-conducted man, woman, girl, or youth, either peasant or middle-class. If the Frenchman has but two sous (half-pence), one only will be spent, the other saved. He saves for the marriage dowry of his daughter, for rainy days, for old age. There are various old-age savings-banks, managed by Government, which take care of the money.

Since the Franco-Prussian War the French have been heavily taxed ; there are taxes on everything—on all the small commodities of life. Lucifer matches, for instance, are a State manufacture ; no private firm may issue them. Little boxes that in England would cost a farthing (and be dear at that, for they are very bad) are labelled “Indirect Taxation,” and are sold for two sous (or one penny). English matches are greatly prized, and sometimes smuggled in, like many other duty-paying articles.

Every town and village has its *octroi*, a sort of turnpike, placed at regular distances along the boundary-line. There whatever passes in and out is subject to inspection and taxation. Carts, carriages, trams, omnibuses—all are stopped. Out rush the blue-liveried, gold-striped officials ; they demand the contents of your parcels, peep, if need be, into your bags and baskets.

“They’ll put a tax on children next,” was the exclamation of a buxom *bourgeoise*, annoyed at the delay. But she said it with a laugh. Shadow and sunshine, smiles and tears, pleasures and annoyances—such is life. None know this better than the French “provincial,” and he takes it in good part.

Washing is an important industry in the country places around Paris and all towns. The linen is carried down to the river or brook—to a stream of flowing water ; there the women and girls kneel on the banks, sometimes stand above their ankles in water, washing, rinsing, chatting. Clean and sweet, the linen is carried back at the end of the day and hung out to dry ; it then passes to the ironers. Theirs is an industry



THE WASHING FOUNTAIN.

apart, one very much to the fore both in town and country. In rooms opening out upon the street the women and girls—young and pretty usually—are to be seen ironing busily on long tables, their fresh, dainty linen strewn and hung on every side.

The national costumes of the different provinces are gradually being discarded. They are to be seen some-

times on fête-days and at religious processions. They are always picturesque and becoming, and consist generally of a full short skirt and ample, trimmed bodice with large sleeves for the women; a large apron, often richly embroidered; a distinctive cap; and various ornaments, earrings, brooches, chains, often very beautiful and of great value.

In the country the labourer still generally wears his long, loose, blue or white cotton blouse. It is like a smock-frock without the smocking. The old women and young children wear closely-fitting white muslin caps.

Boys, both in town and country, have their heads closely cropped; and those of the working classes usually wear long, tunic-like pinafores, black or blue, held in by a leather belt. Sabots—*i.e.*, thick wooden shoes—are worn by the peasants in all country places.

The younger women of the working classes always go about without any head covering on week-days. The hat or bonnet is kept for Sundays and holidays. Its more frequent wear marks a rise in social station. Cooks, children's maids and nurses wear caps when on duty, of a distinctive form in each case, often trimmed with hand-made lace or embroidery. The housemaid goes bareheaded.

The majority of the French are Roman Catholics. In the country especially the services, ceremonies, and feasts of their religious life have hitherto been a marked feature. Things are changing now.

Sunday is not kept as in the British Isles, but most people generally go to church on Sunday morning, the earlier the better. After service the women of the poorer

classes will frequently go off to market. Sunday is never actually market-day, but provision and other shops are open, and they see no harm in buying what is needed for their Sunday dinner or their holiday-going toilette.

Men work, too, all over France on the Sunday, though the larger shops, warehouses, and offices are never open now. Those who are not at work on this day make holiday. All the museums and places of amusement are open; bands play; there are often horse-races; trains and trams are crowded; people in their Sunday-best throng the streets. They are seldom rowdy. Nowhere is French politeness more marked than among respectable working people and the ordinary middle classes.

6—French Expansion.

There are certain extensive territories in various parts of the world which belong to France. They are mostly to be found in tropical or subtropical regions, and they are chiefly useful for purposes of trade. We shall not find among them any large settlement of colonists from the mother country like our British nations of Canada, Australia, or New Zealand.

Let us turn first to Asia. At one time it seemed likely that India would belong to France instead of to Britain; and it was only the genius of Lord Clive which prevented our losing hold on the peninsula. At the present day France owns certain coast towns in India which are useful for trade, so that she still has a footing in this quarter of the continent.

Her most important possession in Asia, however, lies

in the south-eastern peninsula sometimes known as Indo-China. Here she settled some hundred years ago, taking possession of the lower course of the great Mekong River with the hope of using it as an outlet for the rich produce of Indo-China, which consists chiefly of valuable timbers and rice, as well as minerals.

It was hoped that this great river would also prove navigable right up to the southern states of China, and that it might be used to bring down to the coast the tea, silk, and other products of those parts. But this proved a vain hope, for the river is not navigable above the fourteenth parallel of latitude.

When this was discovered the French turned their attention to the Red and Black Rivers, which flow into the Gulf of Tongking; and here they now own an extensive territory, though these two rivers have not proved the useful outlets for the trade of Southern China which it was expected they would be.

Generally speaking, French Indo-China now includes the land between the Mekong and the sea to the eastward and that drained by the lower course of the stream, the total area being nearly equal to that of France. The chief town is Tongking, on a gulf of the same name. The independent country of Siam lies to the west of the French territory, and contains the best outlet for the trade of the Indo-Chinese Peninsula—namely, the Menam River. To the west of Siam there are lands belonging to Britain.

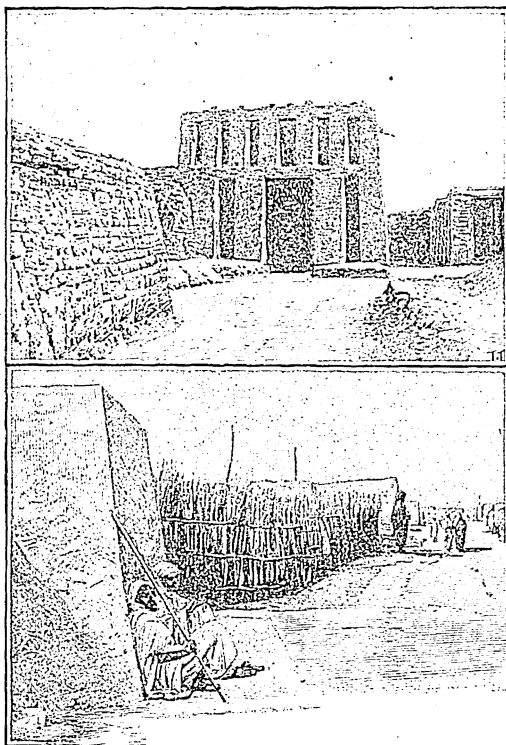
France tried also to establish herself in North America, and here General Wolfe was the saviour of British power. At the present day she owns a few islands in the West Indies, in which such things as sugar, coffee, tobacco and

cotton are grown, and the territory in the northern part of South America known as French Guiana.

But the most extensive French colonies are to be found in Africa. Tunis, on the North African Coast, is a French protectorate, and here is the great naval station of Bizerta, not far from our own at Malta, and opposite the southern coast of France itself. Agriculture is the chief occupation in this country, and grain, esparto-grass, the vine, and the olive, are extensively grown. There is much mineral wealth, as yet unworked, in the coast ranges, and the sponges taken off the shores form an important export.

To the west of Tunis is the French colony of Algeria, which has a very fertile strip of land between the Atlas range and the coast, and much mineral wealth in the mountain lands, including petroleum. The chief town and port is Algiers, once a famous resort of Mediterranean pirates.

In the westernmost part of Africa there are French possessions and protectorates covering a total area more than three times that of France itself. These include Senegal and French Guinea, near our own Gambia trading stations; the French Sudan, a large area on the Upper Senegal and Upper and Middle Niger; the Ivory Coast, on the Gulf of Guinea; Dahomey, west of Lagos; and the French Sahara, a huge protectorate in which lies the caravan centre of Timbuktu, on the Niger. In these lands there are many trading stations. To these the natives bring palm-oil, gold-dust, ivory, gums, cotton, rubber, and nuts of various kinds, which are obtained from the regions inland, where only black people can work.



SCENES IN TIMBUKTU.

Then there is French Congo, a large and ill-defined territory extending from the eastern shore of the Gulf of Guinea, eastward on either side of the equator, and northward to Lake Chad. This country is covered with dense forests, which contain much valuable timber.

The large and mountainous island of Madagascar, off the south-east coast of Africa, also belongs to France, and exports rubber, sugar, and other tropical produce. And in the north-eastern corner of the continent, opposite Aden, there is an extensive territory known as French Somaliland.

CHAPTER IV.—THE GERMAN EMPIRE.

1.—A General Survey.

THE German Empire is made up of a number of States, which lie in the centre of Europe. These States are kingdoms, or duchies, which were once independent, but now form a confederation under the King of Prussia, who has the title of German Emperor,* or Kaiser.

Germany has a sea-board on the Baltic and one on the North Sea, and there is communication between these two seas by means of the Kaiser Wilhelm Canal from Kiel to the mouth of the River Elbe. Her land neighbours are Denmark, Holland, Belgium, France, Switzerland, Austria, and Russia. It is not surprising that she keeps a large army of soldiers with such a land frontier to guard.

It may readily be seen that Germany is not so well placed for oversea trade as France or Britain. A good deal of her trade passes through Holland by way of the Rhine. Yet, in spite of her difficulties, Germany has won a leading place among the commercial nations.

We may divide Germany into a northern plain and a southern highland region. The former is drained by a number of broad, slow-winding rivers. "The character of these rivers," writes a traveller, "is altogether different from the rushing streams of the mountain districts; they eat into their banks and change their course at will; they throw up islands or shoals in their beds; in flood they overflow the level country round, and form deltas

* Not Emperor of Germany (see page 81).

at their mouths, through which they reach the sea in divided streams."

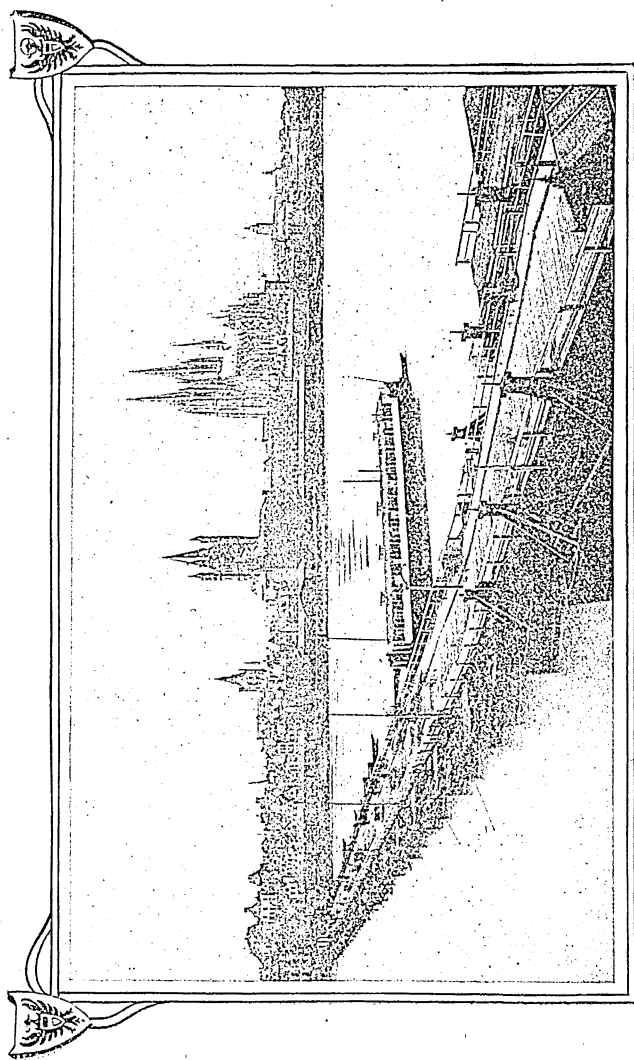
In the northern plain there are a very large number of small lakes, fringed with reeds and covered with water-lilies, which add great charm to the scenery. On the Baltic shore there are many fresh-water lakes, which are cut off from the sea by long bars of earth, consisting of sand and clay. These bars have been formed where the water of the sea and the river met, the former bringing sand, the latter clay, to form the barrier. A lake of this kind is called a Haff.

In some parts the coast is so low that it has to be protected by dykes, which must be kept in constant repair. Behind the dykes are the marsh lands, on which there are good pastures and many fine farms.

The Middle Rhine valley is famous for the beauty of its scenery, especially in the neighbourhood of Coblenz, opposite which is the strong fortress of Ehrenbreitstein—the "broad stone of honour." A traveller up the river thus describes it:

"As we came opposite the mouth of the Moselle, and under the shadow of the mighty fortress, I gazed up with awe at its massive walls. The scene went past like a panorama; the bridge of boats opened, the city glided behind us, and we entered the highlands again.

"Above Coblenz almost every mountain has a ruin and a legend. I sat upon the deck the whole afternoon as mountains, towns, and castles passed by on either side. Approaching the Lorelei is some of the finest scenery on the river. The mountains draw near to each other at this point, and the Lorelei rock rises up for 600 feet from the water. This is the haunt of the



ON THE RHINE OPPOSITE COLOGNE.

water-nymph Lorelei, whose song charmed the ear of the boatman while his barque was dashed to pieces on the rocks below. It is also famous for its remarkable echo."

In the higher part of its course the Rhine cuts its way between the Vosges and the Schwarz Wald (Black Forest) ranges. The latter mountains are covered to the summit with trees, with many wide stretches of pines of a very dark green foliage, which are said to have given its name to this range. From the Black Forest region flows the Danube, the upper course of which drains the plateau of Bavaria.

To the east of this plateau rises another forest range, the Bohmer Wald, which helps to separate Germany from Bohemia. On two more sides this Austrian province is bounded by mountains, and on their German slopes are found rich stores of mineral wealth. Two great German rivers flow from this region—the Elbe and the Oder—but neither has its source in German territory.

From Saxony westward to the Rhine basin is a stretch of wooded highland. In the middle part are the Harz Mountains, with the lofty peak of the Brocken, which was said to be haunted by witches in days gone by. The "weird sisters," so the legend said, gathered together on the night of the last day of April, and went through their mad capers round the summit of the Brocken. And on this night the young folks still carry burning torches about the hills to scare away the witches.

The climate of Germany is, on the whole, temperate, but it is much colder on the northern plains than in the South. In winter the rivers and lakes are frozen, and

the ice is sometimes a yard thick. Yet, though the winter is very severe, the air is drier than with us, and this makes the cold easier to bear.

“Day after day, perhaps for several weeks together, there will be a brilliant blue sky overhead and a dazzling mantle of white on the earth beneath, and each afternoon the sun sinks glowing crimson upon a pathless plain of snow. Winter rules severely, like the despot that he is, but at least his court is splendid, and even his rigour is not ill meant.”

2.—Occupations and Towns.

The population of Germany is about one-third greater than that of the United Kingdom, but the density per square mile is very much smaller. Berlin, the German capital, is the third city in Europe for population, and there are more than thirty towns with over 100,000 people.

The mines and factories employ two-fifths of the people. Germany is gradually becoming a manufacturing country, and ceasing to produce sufficient food for her needs.

She has abundance of coal, and raises each year about half as much as the United Kingdom. She also has rich mines of iron, copper, lead, silver and zinc, and an enormous quantity of salt. These minerals are mostly found in the basin of the Middle Rhine, in the Harz Mountains, in the Thuringian Forest, and in Saxony.

In or near these districts, too, we find most of the great and populous towns, which have huge factories, turning out nearly everything required in a modern civilized country—woollen, cotton, and linen fabrics,

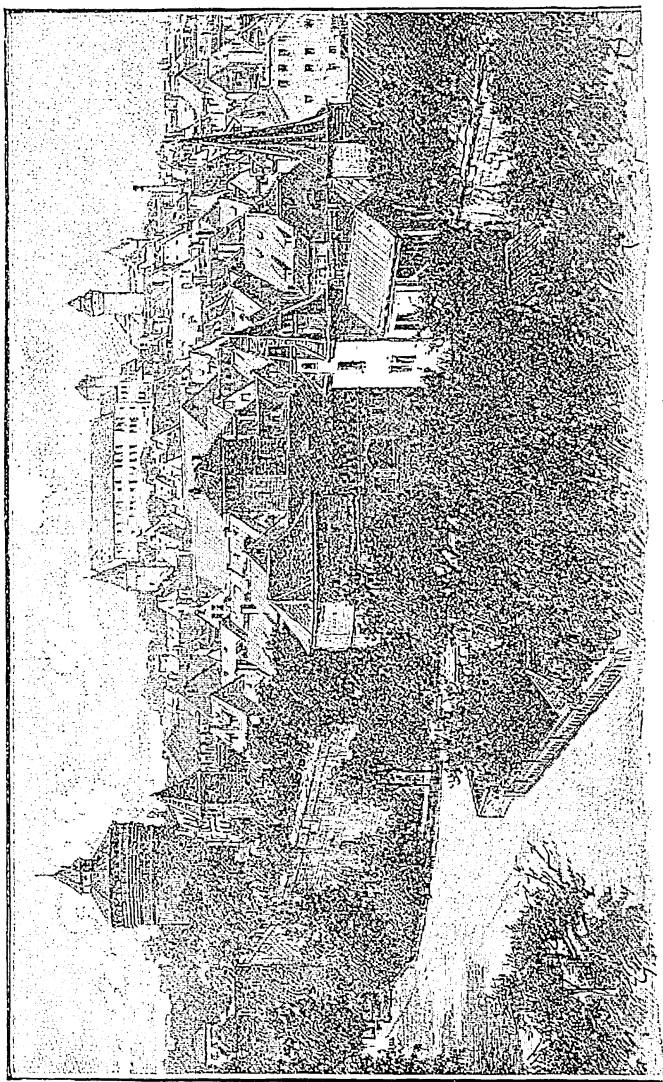
iron goods, chemicals, glass, and large numbers of fancy articles of various kinds.

Many of the great and busy towns of the Middle Rhine region, of Saxony, and of the country between Elbe and Weser, are very much like our own centres of industry. Here we have great iron and steel foundries, mills and factories, forests of tall chimneys sending out great clouds of smoke, trains of trucks constantly coming and going, and heaps of coal and slag all around. The houses of the workmen are built for use, and are by no means ornamental. All is bustle, noise, grime, and blackness.

But in some of these places there is an *Altstadt* (old town), where the streets remind us of past ages, when the master-craftsman, builder, carver, iron-worker, or mason, studied beauty as well as comfort. Here, as at Augsburg, Nuremburg, or Brunswick, one may see great variety in the style of the houses, beautiful carving and sculptures, picturesque gables, balconies, turrets, and casements.

Berlin, the chief industrial centre and capital both of Prussia and the Empire, is a modern city, and contains many fine squares, avenues, monuments, and buildings. The most famous thoroughfare is the Unter den Linden, which is planted with four rows of lime-trees. Cologne, on the Rhine, another great manufacturing city, is noted all over the world for its beautiful cathedral, which no words can fitly describe.

Essen, one of the busy towns of what has been called the Rhine Black Country, is famous for its Krupp guns. Here there are several other very large manufacturing towns, the names of which must be noted on the map.



NUREMBURG.

Munich, in the South of Bavaria, stands next to Berlin in population, and is known all over the world for its galleries of sculpture and painting. Another busy town famous for its art treasures is Dresden, in Saxony; and in the north of the same kingdom is Leipzig, the centre of the German book trade, and, after Berlin, the most important inland trade centre in the Empire.

Travellers find many of the smaller towns of Germany full of interest and marked by old-world charm and simplicity. "You may pass through the streets of such a town," writes one, "and never know that any shop or warehouse exists. Places of the kind are there, but there is not a signboard anywhere, much less a display of goods—nothing, in fact, to mark them on the outside from private dwellings. The streets are cobbled right across from house to house; well-kept gardens grace the home of the tradesman and labourer alike; there are no hoardings, no sky-signs, no placards of any kind save the public announcements; in a word, the bill-sticker's art is not appreciated."

The chief crops on German farms are rye and oats, and the former supplies the meal of which the dark-coloured bread of the German peasant is made. These grains are grown mostly on the northern river plains. The Rhine Valley is one of the most fertile regions of Europe, and the climate here is much warmer than in the North—so warm, indeed, that the vine and tobacco are grown as well as grain.

An important land industry is the growth of the beet-root, from which sugar and spirits are made. This crop is raised mostly in the basins of the Upper Weser and Oder. The refuse from the sugar factories is not wasted, but is

often used to feed large herds of swine. Enormous crops of potatoes are raised, not only because they form a cheap food for the poorer people, but also for the spirit which can be distilled from them.

An important branch of German farming is the raising of live-stock, which includes cattle, horses, geese, sheep, as well as the swine already mentioned.

As a commercial country Germany ranks next to Great Britain. She has, as we have seen, much natural wealth, both in the land and in the mines. Her rivers are for the most part useful waterways; she has numerous canals, and a splendid system of railways, which centres at Berlin; and she has an energetic, hard-working people, who are, as a rule, well trained for the work they have to do.

By far the greatest seaport town is Hamburg, at the mouth of the Elbe. Here will be found ships from all parts of the world, especially from the East Coast ports of Great Britain. From this town goods can be sent cheaply by water to many inland districts. Hence the city has become the leading seaport on the Continent. The streets of Hamburg are mostly modern, and not very interesting, the chief beauty of the city being the Alster lakes. These are two broad expansions of a stream which joins the Elbe, with fine broad quays and pleasure-gardens on their banks. This is the favourite recreation-ground of the people of Hamburg, and the lakes in summer-time are crowded with rowing-boats, canoes and small steamers.

Lübeck is the chief centre of German trade in the Baltic, and has for several centuries been a great seaport. It was the leading city of the Hanseatic League of mer-

chants, who were very powerful between the years 1360 and 1630. The navies of the League protected the merchant-ships from pirates, and her armies cleared the overland European trade routes of the robber knights who used to plunder the merchants going from Germany by road into Italy.

The chief foreign possessions of Germany, as we have already seen, are in Africa. They send to Europe such things as coffee, gold, ivory, nuts, and timber; and in German South-West Africa, which is chiefly peopled by Bushmen and Hottentots, there are many large and profitable ostrich farms.

3.—A Glance at German History.

The German Empire of the present day dates only from 1871, and among the Powers of the world it is quite a new thing. Yet there was a Germany long before that date, and the history of the Germans is a long and eventful story, full of absorbing interest.

Charlemagne, the great monarch of Western Europe, was a king of German race. He ruled not only the western part of the present Germany, but also the countries now known as France, Holland, Belgium, Switzerland, Austria, and the northern portion of both Spain and Italy.

At the end of the year 800 this powerful ruler went to Rome and had himself crowned by the Pope as Emperor of the Romans. Thus was founded what was afterwards known as the Holy Roman Empire.

The idea was that the head of this Empire should rule the whole of Western Europe, and should be crowned

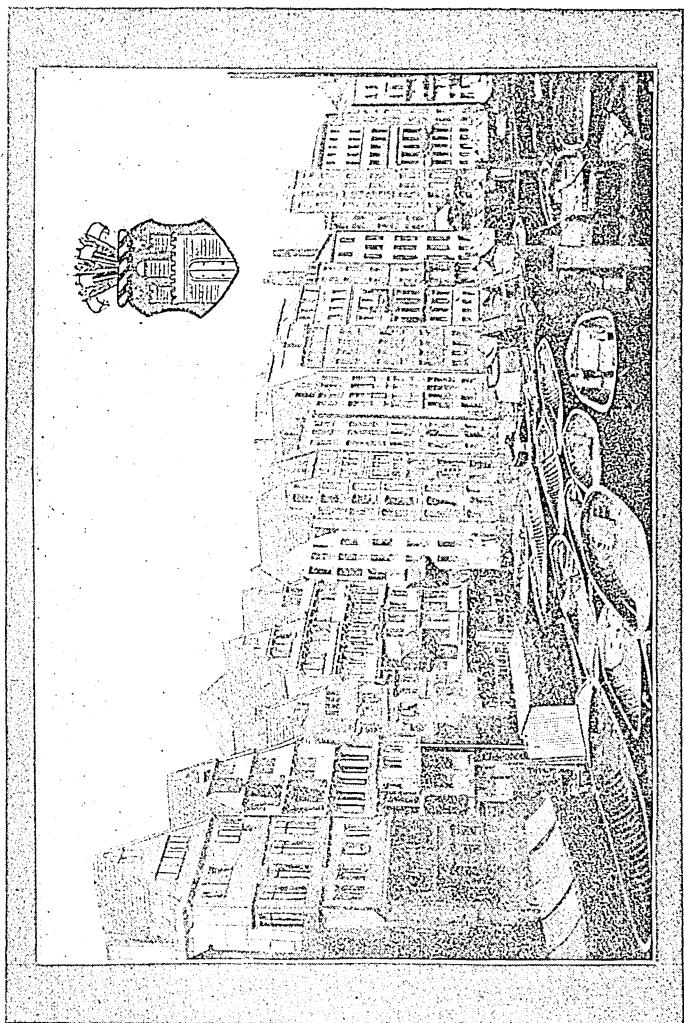


Photo by J. G. McIntosh.

A CANAL IN HAMBURG.

not only as monarch of the German race of Franks at Aachen (Aix-la-Chapelle, the capital of Charlemagne) but also at Rome as *the* Emperor, the successor of the Roman emperors of an earlier time. And this great monarch aspired to be ruler of the whole civilized world.

It was a splendid and a simple plan, but when Charlemagne died his dominions broke up into several parts. France broke away from the Empire, as well as Spain, but each successive king of the Germans went to Rome to be crowned as Emperor; and for a long time the countries we now know as Germany, Austria and Italy were joined together in name under the German monarch, who called himself Emperor of the Romans.

But his empire was a strange thing indeed. It was split up into a number of States under powerful nobles, who were continually fighting against one another, and cared little for their Emperor. One of the most powerful of these noble families was the Austrian House of Hapsburg, and in time it came to pass that the Emperor was always chosen by the nobles from this family, whose chief city was Vienna, now the capital of Austria.

But the Emperor at Vienna had little real hold upon the princes of North Germany, among whom the most powerful was the ruler of Prussia; nor upon the princes who divided the Italian peninsula among them, and were continually fighting with one another. Still, the idea of the Holy Roman Empire lived on, though it would have been better for Germany and better for Italy if they had each been allowed to break away from any connection with the Hapsburg House of Austria. They did finally break away, but not until the time of Napoleon.

It was this great French general and statesman who at last brought the Holy Roman Empire to an end. He claimed to be the successor of Charlemagne, and crowned himself as Emperor in Paris when he had overrun almost the whole of Europe. And the ruler whose capital was at Vienna became the head of what we now call the Austrian Empire.

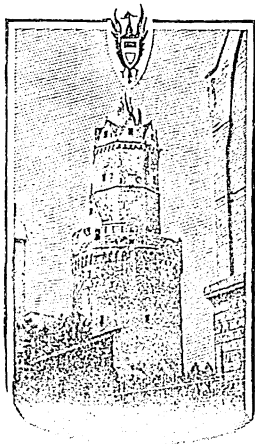
Thus Germany and Italy broke away from their connection with the Holy Roman Empire. And as we follow the history of Europe after the time of Waterloo we see how each of these countries became a separate and united nation. Our present concern is with Germany. We shall deal with Italy in a later chapter. The German States came under the leadership of the King of Prussia; and while they were at war with France in 1870 their princes determined to band themselves together as one nation. So they chose the King of Prussia as their head, and gave him the title of German Emperor; and it was agreed that his heirs should take this title in their turn.

It will be seen, then, that the German Emperor is really a kind of president rather than a sovereign. As King of Prussia, he has not subdued and brought under his power each of the other States of which Germany is composed. He simply stands among the rest of the princes as their elected leader, and is, as it is expressed, *primus inter pares* (first among his peers).

He is not, then, Emperor of Germany in the same way that our King is Emperor of India, and it is incorrect to use this title in speaking of him. We must be careful to call him German Emperor, as he is always careful to call himself; and this title will serve to remind us how he stands in relation to the other German princes.

The German Emperor, however, as King of Prussia, is by far the most powerful of the German princes, for Prussia may be called the backbone of the Empire; and in the Council of fifty-eight members known as the Bundesrath, Prussia has seventeen members. The kingdom of Bavaria has six, the kingdoms of Saxony and Württemberg have four each, and the other States have each a smaller number. There is also a Parliament elected by the people known as the Reichstag.

It is important to remember that Germany is made up of these separate parts, because the people of the various States differ greatly in their ways of life. But we must not forget that there is one Germany which the German speaks of affectionately as "the Fatherland," one united nation prepared to take a leading place among the foremost and best equipped in the world.



A WATCH TOWER ON
THE RHINE.

4.—Germans and their Ways—I.

Directly you get to the German frontier you are reminded that the Germans of to-day are a nation of soldiers. Even the railway and postal officials wear spick-and-span uniforms; while in the streets of a garrison town companies of soldiers march to and fro; raw recruits are being drilled in the barrack-yards; and officers appear everywhere and on all occasions in full uniform. In Germany a boy looks forward as a matter of course to the time when he will serve his time with the army. If he is poor he will be called for two years, and the State will pay all his expenses. If he can pass certain examinations, and can clothe, maintain, and house himself, he need only join for one year, and this is what the sons of prosperous parents usually do.

When his term of service is over he has not done with the army, whatever his work in life is to be. He has to go back at intervals for a short period, so that he will not forget his drill, his rifle practice, and, if he has been in a cavalry regiment, his horsemanship. And in course of time he passes into the army reserve, which would be called out in a time of national danger. Young men who leave Germany rather than perform these duties imposed by the State lose their rights of citizenship.

The military life must be a heavy physical strain on boys who grow up without athletic training. German boys learn gymnastics at school, but they do not play cricket, football, hockey, or fives. At the Universities they learn to fence, but not to box. In Hamburg, the great commercial city built round the basin of the

Alster, there is skating in winter and both rowing and sailing all through the summer. But the majority of Germans living in cities do not understand the management of boats, nor can they ride or drive. The boys go to day-schools, which are all under State control, and provide an education that is classical in a *Gymnasium* and mercantile in a *Realschule* or a *Burgherschule*.

There are twenty-two Universities in Germany, but the young men do not live in college buildings as they do at Oxford or Cambridge. One of the most famous German Universities is Heidelberg on the Neckar. It is surrounded by hills and woods, and there is a fine old ruined castle on one of the heights above the town. The narrow, winding streets of Heidelberg are crowded with students and with their great dogs. Those who wear little flat, coloured caps are "corps" students. A "corps" may be described as a club without club buildings. There are five in Heidelberg, and they preserve curious old rules of conduct amongst themselves. One colour does not associate with another colour, but for nearly 300 years the "corps" students of Heidelberg have met twice a week at an inn across the river and fought duels with each other. They fight with narrow-bladed swords, and are very proud of their scars. Bismarck is said to have fought thirty-two of these friendly duels in a single term. When gentlemen quarrel in Germany they still settle the matter by a duel with pistols or sabres. An officer in the army, for instance, is obliged to fight if he has been insulted. He would have to leave the army if he did not.

In German towns nearly everyone lives in flats. The modern streets are wide and straight, with tall white



WINTER SPORTS IN GERMANY.

buildings. But many towns have old quarters that are very picturesque. Here the streets will be narrow and winding, the path paved with cobble-stones, and the houses steep and overhanging, with gabled roofs, dormer-windows, and ramshackle wooden balconies. Nuremberg still has medieval buildings in a good state of preservation, and so has Lübeck, the old Hanseatic town.

At night in some of the small old towns you still see lighted lamps hanging from iron chains swung across the street. There are many splendid old cathedrals in Germany; the Dom in Cologne is one of the most famous. In Freiburg the market-place is close to the cathedral, and as the peasants who crowd to it wear the Black Forest costumes, the scene is a very pretty one. In many German towns there is a market every day, and the housewife goes herself or sends a maid to buy what is wanted. The maid-servants go out without hats and with large baskets on their arms. They wear dark blue cotton dresses, and in Hamburg the waiting-maids wear light cotton dresses with short sleeves. You see none of the cheap ragged finery in Germany that is sometimes seen in England. All the girls learn to knit at school, and the women knit tidy stockings for themselves and their families.

The rooms of a German flat open into each other, so that each room has at least three doors. The floors are painted or parqueted, and carpets are not considered a necessary. There is a sofa in every room and a small table in front of it. Instead of our open fire-places Germans have shut-up iron or porcelain stoves that heat a room well, but do not ventilate it. On each bed there



GERMAN PEASANT COSTUME.

is a *plumeau*, an immense down covering as big as a feather-bed; and in winter, even poor people have double windows to their houses. A German housewife is very proud of her house and table linen, and has great quantities of it. The girls in Germany go to day-schools just as their brothers do, but when a girl leaves school she usually learns cooking and other housework. German cooking is more elaborate than ours, and ladies do a good deal of it themselves. The rye-bread that is eaten all over Germany

is excellent, and so are the little white rolls served with coffee for breakfast. In Hamburg dinner is at five o'clock, but in most places it is at mid-day. Good beer is brewed everywhere, and in South Germany wine is so plentiful that many hotels provide it free of charge with dinner. All through the summer people live out of doors as much as they can. Every town has its public gardens, where refreshments are provided, and a good band.

The poorer classes are very fond of cheap subscription dances, and men of all classes play skittles and a card

game called *Skat*. At Christmas, and at intervals throughout the year, fairs are held in German towns. The most famous is the Leipzig *Messe*, to which merchants from all parts of the world used to come. Thousands of young fir-trees are sent in to the Christmas fairs every year, for on Christmas Eve every German family from the Emperor downwards has a lighted tree. New Year's Eve and New Year's Day are kept as festivals, too. In Hamburg the whole city meets at midnight in a street facing the Alster, and people wish each other a happy New Year. Other anniversaries, such as birthdays and silver weddings, are kept with all the ceremonial people can afford; while a betrothal is a public social event announced by printed cards, and as much celebrated by feasts and flowers and visits as the marriage that follows.

Many of the theatres in Germany are partly supported by the State, and they are cheap and good. The Germans are not such fine actors as the French, but they are the most musical nation in the world. From Bach to Wagner the great composers have been German, and wherever Germans gather together they will have good music in their homes, at concerts and at the opera. Their literature was great for a short period, when Lessing, Goethe, Schiller and Heine were alive—that is, from 1747 to 1853. From north to south there is, of course, much variety in the national temperament, but, broadly speaking, the Germans are patient, thorough, faithful and hard-working. These qualities are shown in their home-life, in the splendid organization of their great army, and in the important contributions to science and scholarship made by their learned men.

They are like the English in having high ideals of conduct and duty, but their manners are more expansive, and the South Germans are more pleasure-loving and easy-going. A third of the population is Roman Catholic, nearly two-thirds are Protestant, and half a million are Jews.

5.—Germans and their Ways—II.

It is not as much the custom in Germany as it is in England for well-to-do people to live in the country. Where there is fine scenery—on the Rhine, for instance, and in some parts of the Black Forest—a few modern villas have been built lately; and when any part of an old, historic castle is habitable, the owners come for the summer; but there are whole districts in rural Germany where you may travel for days and never see a gentleman's house. In East Prussia and in Mecklenburg the large landowners live on their estates and cultivate them. Their labourers are badly paid, and badly housed and fed. In fact, they are not much better off now than when they were serfs, forced to remain in the village where they were born, and to work for the lord of the manor. The factory hands of this eastern part of Germany are as poor as the agricultural labourers. They live on coarse rye-bread and vegetables, and it is said that the half-starved weavers of Silesia will kill a stray dog and eat it, as people have often been driven to do in a besieged town. The great heaths and forests are full of deer, wild boar, and birds, and the owners of the land hunt and shoot them. But though the people are so poor there is little poaching, as the laws against it are very severe.

In those parts of Germany, both North and South, where the peasants own land and farm it they are prosperous and contented. Where wine is grown they often own a small vineyard, and in forest country the village commune usually owns part of the forest near, and allows the villagers rights of fuel and pasturage. The hills of the Black Forest are mostly covered with trees near the top, while the fields are on the lower slopes and in the valleys. The farm-houses are built of wood, and they have thatched roofs with deep, overhanging eaves, and outside balconies and staircases of wood. The farm animals are kept in stables on the ground-floor, the living-rooms are on the first-floor, and the granaries and storerooms are in the roof.

The houses are usually clustered together, and form a straggling village. Sometimes a small garden and orchard are attached to a peasant's house, but it is more usual to see stacks of timber and great heaps of manure close by. Each village has a church, and on nearly every church tower, as well as on some of the farm roofs, there is a big stork's nest. The storks fly away to Egypt in the autumn, and come back in the spring. In the early summer you may often see three or four young storks eagerly looking over the edge of the nest for their parents, who are away in the marshes finding frogs and snails for them.

The day's work begins very early in a German village, and one of the first persons to be out and about is the little goose-herd. All night long the watchman patrols the streets, and as each hour passes he proclaims the time and sings a few lines of a sacred song. When dawn comes he goes, and then a little boy, poorly clad, marches

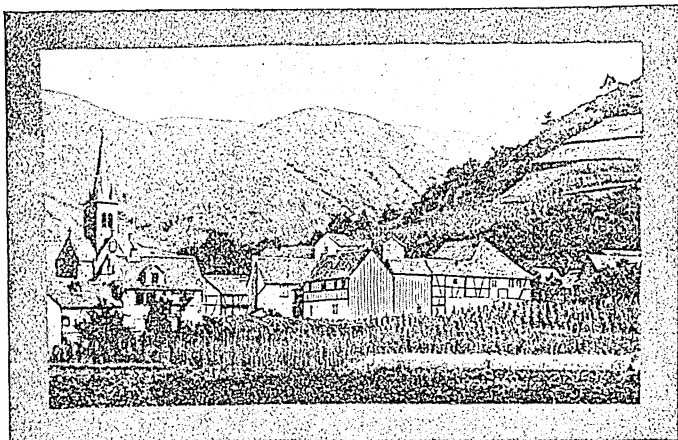


Photo by J. Howard Harris.

A GERMAN VILLAGE.

through the village piping on his flute. Directly he begins you hear a fuss and a cackle and a flutter of wings, and from every house and yard the geese come out. They follow the boy to the hills, where they stay all day and feed ; and at night he leads them back again, playing the same tune.

The cows turn out at daybreak, too, and they wear square-shaped bells that tinkle prettily as they move. They feed on distant pastures, and come back at night in a drove to the village, and then each cow knows its own stable, and turns into it without help from the herd.

Every small inn in a South German village brews its own beer or makes wine of its own grapes, and when the working day is over the peasants sit together outside these inns and drink and smoke and play skittles. The young people usually belong to a singing club, and in summer they organize excursions to neighbouring

villages, and have competitions with other clubs. They are very fond of dancing, too, and will come from all the valleys round dressed in their best clothes. In the Black Forest each valley has its own costume, and some are very curious and expensive. The men go to church on Sundays in long black velvet coats and knee-breeches, tall hats and scarlet waistcoats. The women wear full skirts as bright in colour as stained glass, and bodices of velvet and white linen. Their head-dress varies widely, and you may know from a woman's cap or hat in which valley she lives.

The bride and bridesmaids at a wedding wear a heavy rounded wreath of white beads. The night before the wedding is called *Polter-Abend*. "Polter" means "noise," and it used to be the fashion for the bride's friends to bring crockery and smash it against her door for luck. In the Black Forest they hang two little fir-trees with coloured streamers, and set them in front of the bride's house on the wedding-day. After the marriage there is a long, hot dinner that lasts for hours, and after the dinner there is a dance to which everyone in the village comes. Sometimes the feasting goes on for days and is very expensive. At the wedding of a well-to-do farmer a short time ago his guests consumed 1 fat cow, 7 pigs, 17 calves, 220 hens, 200 loaves and cakes, 370 gallons of beer, and a large quantity of wine and spirits.

In Germany the winters are colder and the summers hotter than in England, and except near the sea-coast the climate is a dry one. There is deep, crisp snow for months in some places, and then sleighs are used on the country roads. Here and there in mountain districts people go about on ski, the long snow-skates so much

used in Norway. The summer comes suddenly: the frozen rivers thaw and rush forward with a noise like thunder, the crops start into growth, and the hay is ready to carry by the end of May. All over the South of Germany grapes are largely grown out of doors, and some of the best light wines in the world come from the Rhine and the Moselle. The hills that are covered with vines are very bare-looking until the autumn. The vines, like hops, are trained up high poles, and in October men and women and children are busy gathering the grapes. The hot summers make fruits and vegetables cheaper and more plentiful than they are in England; and it is the custom to plant avenues of fruit-trees along the country roads.

A great deal of field work is done by women in Germany; they carry immense loads of fodder on their backs, and they are even seen between the shafts of a cart, sometimes with a cow or a horse to help them, sometimes not. Children have to go to school from the age of six to fourteen, but the holidays are arranged so that they can work in the fields during harvest and, in wine countries, when the grapes are ripe. They are employed, too, in the toy factories around Stuttgart and Nuremburg. There is an old nursery rhyme that says:

“The children of Germany take pleasure in making
What the children of England take pleasure in breaking;”

and German children still send us dolls' houses, Noah's Arks, carved wood animals, bricks, ninepins, and toy towns. Of course, these things are really manufactured over there because wood can be bought cheaply near the great forests.

CHAPTER V.—THE AUSTRO-HUNGARIAN
MONARCHY.

1.—A General Survey.

AUSTRIA-HUNGARY consists of the Austrian Empire, the kingdom of Hungary, and the provinces of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The whole country is under the Austrian Emperor, who is also King of Hungary; but each of these two States has its own Parliament and Government. Austria-Hungary is therefore a dual monarchy.

In shape Austria-Hungary is a rough oval, with two extensions on the west (the plateau of Bohemia and the mountainous Tyrol) and one on the south-west, where there is a comparatively short sea-board on the Adriatic. The country has many land neighbours, the names of which should be noted on the map. It is also interesting to note how many large rivers pierce the northern frontier. The Carpathians, which enclose the kingdom of Hungary, only form part of the frontier in their eastern portion; to the north-east of the range lies the Austrian province of Galicia.

Through the middle portion of the country runs the Danube, which with its feeders practically drains the whole land, but Austria-Hungary has neither the upper nor the lower waters of this great river. After leaving Germany the stream flows through a picturesque region, which has been thus described by a traveller :

“We are surrounded on all sides by steep mountains clothed with forests. The river spreads out into a lake completely closed in by wood-clad heights. On and on

for many long miles, through scenes of the most romantic beauty; past mountains clothed from top to bottom with dark pine; ruined castles peering out from amidst the fir forests; small villages with overhanging roofs and wooden balconies; past side valleys, up which you can see waterfalls and overhanging bridges; and over rapids and whirlpools that boil and rage around you."

There are other parts of the Danube where the scenery is quite as imposing, and there are numerous rapids and waterfalls in the course of the stream. At the point where it leaves the country are the famous Iron Gates. Here there were formerly frequent falls in the river-bed, and the channel was impeded by many dangerous rocks, shoals, and rapids.

But about twenty years ago the Government began the construction of a passage through this dangerous part of the river. The work was both costly and difficult, but now it is possible for vessels to avoid what was at one time the most dangerous part of the river by using a canal cut in the solid rock on the southern bank. The name Iron Gates does not refer to the mountains on either side of the stream, which at this point are by no means steep, but to the rocks in the bed of the river.

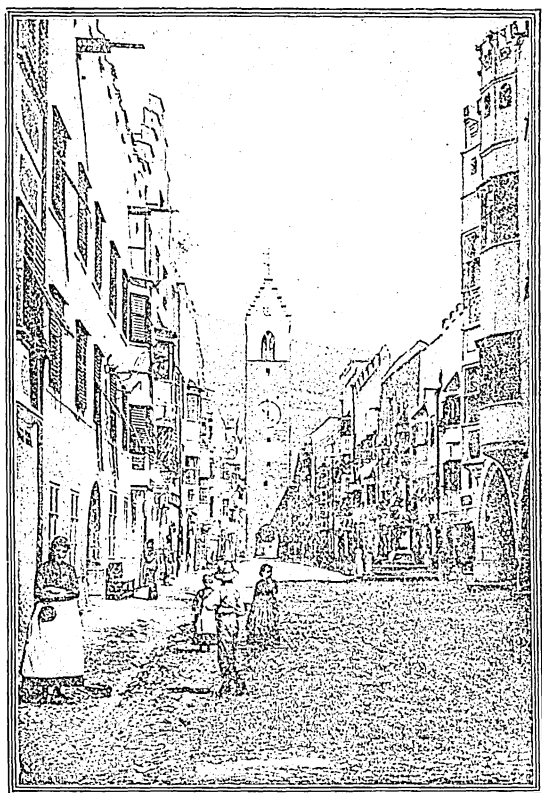
In the western part of Austria are the Alpine provinces, where there is much grand scenery, with many great glaciers, charming lakes, and numbers of mineral springs. To many of the sheltered valleys in the Tyrol and Salzburg large numbers of people come to spend the winter. The district is not very fertile, the pasture poor, and the population is less dense than in any other part of Austria.

Large numbers of tourists visit the Dolomite Mountains, in the Southern Tyrol, which are remarkable for their peculiar form. They have "sharp peaks or horns, sometimes rising in pinnacles and obelisks, at others toothed like the jaws of an alligator. . . . Sometimes the points are so numerous and slender that they put one in mind of a bundle of bayonets or sword-blades." The colouring of the rocks of which these mountains are composed is also very remarkable—dark red, brilliant yellow, deep blue, black, and silvery-white, all blended together in a most wonderful manner.

The Carpathians are for the most part covered with forests; and there are many wide stretches of wooded land without a single village. There is a great difference in climate between the north-eastern and the south-western slopes of this range, the former being exposed to the cold east winds and snow-storms of Russia. The sandstone rock of the Carpathians contain natural oil in many places, and there are also rich salt-mines in the western part of the range. The most beautiful part of the Carpathians is the High Tatra, a rocky ridge of granite pyramids with deep valleys, once filled by great glaciers, but now sprinkled with mountain lakes, or tarns, known as "eyes of the sea."

The plain of the Danube is very fertile, especially that part occupied by Hungary. Here the climate is, on the whole, warmer than on the Bohemian plateau or in Galicia, to the north-east of the Carpathians; but the eastern part of Hungary is subject to extremes of heat and cold, being so far removed from the influence of the sea.

The coast regions of Austria are high and rocky, being



A STREET IN A TYROLESE TOWN.

taken up by mountain ridges running parallel with the coast, cut through by only one fairly long river. In this part there are warm winters and hot summers. The scenery on this coast is very beautiful, combining the grandeur of the fiords of Norway with the bright colour-

ing and vegetation of the Mediterranean coast. In places the sea forms long and deep channels, where the cliffs rise to a height of nearly six thousand feet. If it were not so difficult to reach the coast, Dalmatia would be thronged each year with visitors from all parts of Europe.

2.—Occupations and Towns.

Though the area of Austria is about twice that of the United Kingdom, the number of people is only about one-seventh greater. Vienna, the capital of Austria, is the fourth city of Europe in point of population.

The people of Austria-Hungary belong to various races. In the North-West they are of German race; in the East the people are of the same race as the Russians; the Hungarians are a separate and distinct race, whose forefathers, as we shall see later, came, in the first place, from the central part of Asia; the inhabitants of the coast lands are mostly Italians and people akin to them. But German is the language of the educated people nearly all over the country.

The greater number of the people in both Austria and Hungary work on the land. They raise large crops of grain, especially on the fertile Hungarian plain, which grows wheat from which very fine white flour is made. They cultivate the vine, and make wine which is known all over the world. They grow the sugar-beet, and some parts of the South are warm enough to raise rice and tobacco.

Large numbers of the peasants work in the great forests of the mountain slopes as woodmen and charcoal burners; timber, indeed, is one of the leading exports of

the country ; and in the forest districts there are many mills for converting wood into pulp, from which paper is made. Others, again, engage in stock-farming, and large numbers of cattle and horses are fed on the rich pastures of the river valleys in the central part of the country. But Austria-Hungary is not only a farming country ; she has many factories and mills, and these are mostly to be found in Bohemia and Moravia in the North, where there are coal and iron mines, and round about Vienna. From these places come the fabrics for making clothing, pig-iron, bronze, and metal goods, a large number of fancy articles of numerous kinds, and great quantities of glass-ware.

Vienna is not only a great manufacturing city, but also a great trading centre. It is the terminus of railways from all parts of the Continent, and in the olden days was a meeting-place of many land routes taken by merchants across Europe. So we find it a scene of busy life, almost as full of activity as Paris or London. It has many fine public buildings, palaces and theatres, broad open spaces planted with trees, and wide, imposing streets. It is also the centre of social life, and has a well-known University famous for its men of learning.

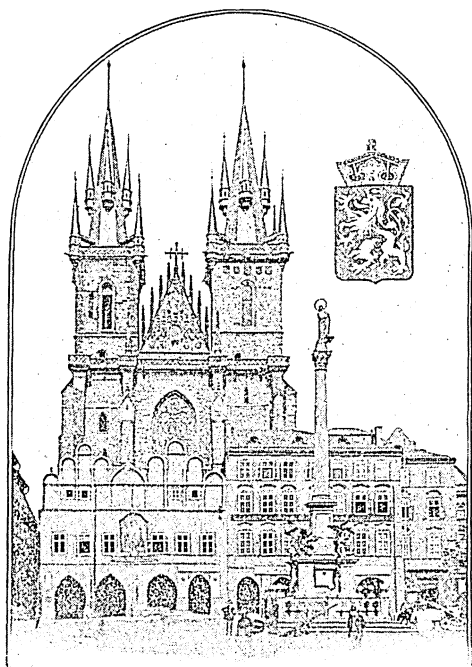
Prague is the leading city of Bohemia. Like many German towns, it has an Altstadt (Old Town) and a Neustadt (New Town). In the former there are many quaint buildings, palaces and churches which recall bygone ages ; in the latter are the porcelain and glass works, and woollen mills, with their forests of tall chimneys and near them the houses of the workmen. The city is overlooked by the Hradschin, the splendid castle of the old Bohemian kings.

Near the city of Krakow in the north of Austria are the famous salt-mines of Wieliczka. The mines are huge vaults or caves in the earth, which are reached by flights of steps. Some of these mines are no longer worked, and are now used as stables; others have been made into chapels in which everything is carved of gleaming rock-salt—statues, altars, ceilings, doors. When these caves are lighted up, the walls shine as though they were set with diamonds. There are also several lakes in these caverns, over which visitors are taken in boats.

The capital of Hungary is the twin city of Buda-pest, on the Danube. On one side of the river is Buda, the old capital of the Hungarian kings, with its stately palaces and citadel; on the other side is Pest, which is a modern city full of life and activity, and up-to-date in every way. Between the two flows the noble river which is spanned by several fine bridges; in the middle of the stream is a beautiful island, which is thrown open to the public as a pleasure-garden. There are hot mineral springs at Buda-pest, and the city is visited by many invalids.

In studying the trade of most countries we turn to the sea-board, and note the leading ports which send out and take in various kinds of goods. But in Austria we must take a different course. The chief trading towns are inland, and several of them were busy centres of commerce long before the age of railways—places of meeting for merchants who were travelling between Germany and Russia and the lands of the Mediterranean.

Among such towns we have Lemberg, in the Austrian province of Galicia, which is third for population among Austrian towns, though it is not a great manufacturing



THE TOWN HALL, PRAGUE.

centre. Graz, on the route between Vienna and the coast, is another town of this kind; and on the line from the Austrian capital into Switzerland we have Linz, Salzburg, and Innsbruck.

Austria-Hungary is well supplied with inland waterways, and has many busy railways; but her trade is much less than it would be if she had a longer coast-line, and one which lay nearer to the world's great highways of commerce. Her sea-board is on an inland sea,

and her two ports, Trieste and Fiume, are a long way from her manufacturing centres. So we find that, though these towns do a considerable trade, they are not great ports. Austria-Hungary must look chiefly to German ports for sending out her goods to distant lands; and, as we can see from the map of Europe, these ports are a long way by rail from the Austrian industrial towns and the farms of Hungary.

3.—The Dual Monarchy.

We have already mentioned the connection of Austria with the Holy Roman Empire, which came finally to an end in the days of Napoleon Bonaparte. The present ruler of Austria belongs to the Hapsburg House, from which the "Emperor of the Romans" was chosen for about five hundred years.

The first nobleman of this House chosen by the electors — as the princes were called — was named Rudolph. There is a tradition that an ancestor of his family was one day hunting near his castle in the north of what is now Switzerland, when he lost his favourite hawk. After some time he found it perched on the top of a lofty mountain ridge. Pleased with the splendid view from this point, he afterwards built a castle on this spot, and called it Hawk Castle, or, in German, Habichtsburg, whence the name Hapsburg.

During his reign Rudolph went to war with the King of Bohemia, and secured for his family the Duchy of Austria. After a time the Hapsburgs tried to add to their original estates certain districts known as the



AN AUSTRIAN WOMAN.

Forest Cantons. The people of these districts fought against them. They were willing to remain within the Holy Roman Empire, but they did not wish to become subjects of the House of Austria. There was much fighting, and at last the people of the Forest Cantons, with others who lived in the Western Alps, founded the independent

country now known as Switzerland.

Still the Hapsburg House grew very powerful, and added more and more to their possessions. They had for a long time great power in Italy, and it was against them that the Italians had to fight when they wished to become a separate nation. They tried also to bring Hungary under their rule, and for certain periods were successful. But the Hungarians are not of German race, like the Austrians, and they have always kept a distinct national life. Let us look a little into their history as a separate people.

The first home of the Huns, or Magyars, was in the

central part of Asia, and they moved westward into Europe in the fourth century. They were a wandering people, like many of the tribes of Central Asia at the present day. They had very swift horses, and the men seemed almost to live in the saddle, for they ate their food, and sometimes even slept, on horseback.

Outdoor life and constant exercise had made them very hardy, and they seemed to have lost all sensibility to changes of climate. As a race they were very unlike the tall, fair-haired Germans, being, short, broad-shouldered, and very muscular and strong. They had straight black hair, small eyes, thick lips, and the skin of their faces was like yellow parchment.

These people swarmed into Europe in countless hordes, and settled in the fertile pastures north of the Danube. There they founded the kingdom of Hungary, which was the origin of the State that now forms part of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy. But they did not rest there, for in the fifth century their ruler, Attila, who is known in history as "the Scourge of God," tried to extend the borders of his kingdom on the Danube plain.

He marched into Germany and Gaul, carrying destruction far and wide, and his armies became the terror of Western Europe. But at last he was driven back into Hungary, and after his death his kingdom fell into confusion. But in the ninth century the people of Hungary seem to have become once more united, and they began to make raids upon the lands of the Germans. The German ruler was Henry the Fowler, who is said to have got this name because the messengers who came to offer him the crown found him hawking in a valley near the Harz Mountains. He bought off the Huns for

nine years, and at the end of that time, so well had he used the years of truce, he drove them completely out of Northern Germany.

They came again, however, in the time of Otto, the son of Henry the Fowler, and laid siege to the German city of Augsburg. Here the German King engaged them in a fierce battle outside the walls, in which nearly all the Huns were killed. So the people of Hungary were driven out of Germany, and for a long time they were chiefly engaged in making their own land more like the civilized countries of the West of Europe.

Under King Stephen, who was crowned in the year 1000, the nation was converted to Christianity; and from this time it advanced in power and prosperity till the Hungarians were defeated by the Turks, who held a great part of their land for nearly two hundred years. It was during this time that the crown of Hungary passed into the hands of the Austrian House of Hapsburg.

But the Hungarians were still a separate nation, and they were determined to remain so. When the Turks had been driven out of their land, the Hungarians strove, as our forefathers strove in England, for a free and open Parliament, which should govern the country under the King. They won it, and then for a time lost it. Then, not very long ago, the Emperor Francis Joseph gave it back to them, and since that time the country has greatly prospered.

The Emperor of Austria is crowned King of Hungary at Buda-pest, and the two countries are quite separate from each other so far as their home affairs are concerned. But having the same monarch, they form one

united State among the nations of the world; and Austria-Hungary ranks, as we have seen, as one of the Great Powers.

The two southern provinces of Herzegovina and Bosnia are part of neither Austria nor Hungary, but are under the rule of the joint monarchy. At one time they formed a separate kingdom, which was overrun by the Turks; and when these people were driven out, and the provinces passed under the control of Austria-Hungary, they began to prosper. There are now several manufacturing towns; iron and salt mines are being worked, and railways have been built running into Hungary. Wood is the chief export, while cattle are largely reared, and in many parts there are fine orchards.

4.—The Hungarians of to-day.

As we have already noted, Austria proper is peopled for the most part by German races. In a previous chapter we learnt a little about the people of Germany and their ways. Let us now find out a little about the people of those parts of the dual monarchy which are not German.

We turn first to Hungary, which we must never forget is only linked with Austria politically. The two lands are not joined together to form one country, nor are their people alike in their ways and appearance. The German races sprang from the lands about the shores of the Baltic. The Huns or Magyars came from Asia. They met on the fertile plains of one of the world's greatest rivers. They fought, and Austria in time became the conqueror. This is the origin of the least united of the Great Powers of the world.

The mention of Hungary makes us think of wide stretches of corn land on the well-drained and fertile plain of the Danube. We look in vain for large towns over this wide region, for it is, on the whole, a land of farmers and peasants. Here is a picture of a Hungarian harvest scene from the pen of a traveller :

“ At the end of an hour's drive on the steppe, we came suddenly upon an enormous field of corn, which was being attacked by a hundred and fifty reapers. The corn, falling in such vast quantities, produced a sound as of waves dying away on a long seashore, leaving behind them a broad fringe of foam. About a hundred men and women were tying the corn into sheaves under the direction of an overseer, and they piled them upon large carts, each yoked to six white bullocks. These sunburnt workers, with their fierce moustaches and thin and athletic figures, worked with an activity, a zeal and a fury, as if they were fighting a battle. They swept off the corn as they would have swept off an enemy's encampment.”

The Hungarian peasant is one of the finest types of manhood which can be met with in any country of the world ; and he is very different, both in appearance and character, from the stout, red-faced German, with his pipe, his suit of broadcloth, and his heavy boots. The Hungarian has black hair, black eyes, which gleam and sparkle, the high cheek-bones of the Asiatic, a nose fine and arched, and usually a long, black, fierce moustache. He wears a large hat and a white cloak, or *bunda*, except when working ; then he has usually very wide linen trousers, kept up at the waist by a kerchief or leather belt, a shirt with full, floating sleeves, and either a felt

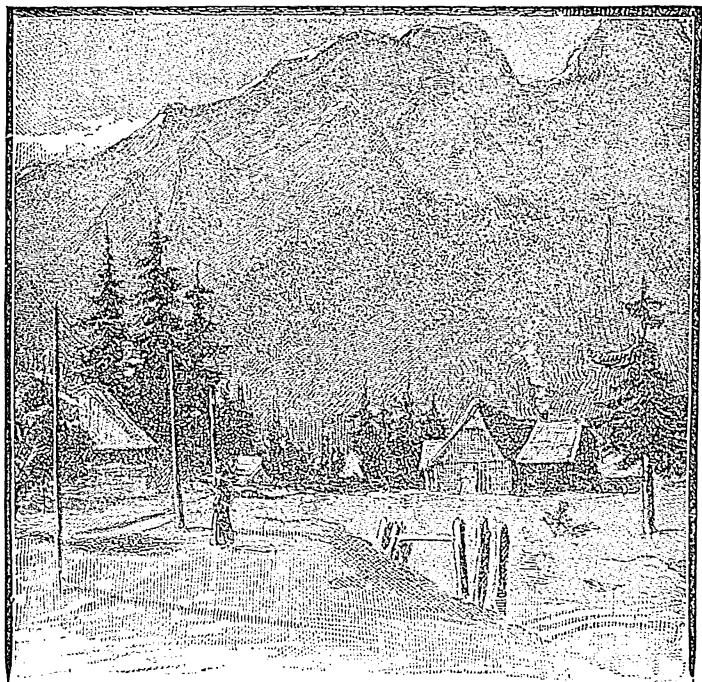
hat or a black sheep-skin cap. He has, as a rule, an air of distinction; he is no mere rustic clown, but, whether at work or at play, he looks a lord.

A Hungarian village is a very pleasing sight. The houses of the peasants are of wood, with thatched roofs, and each stands in its own garden, set with flowering plants and shrubs. The village street is usually set with trees, and forms a shady avenue during the very hot days of summer. The houses are not numbered, but are often marked with crosses, each of a different colour. Thus a person would say that he lived "at the green cross" or "at the red cross." The outside walls of the cottage are usually painted with bright colours, the window-frames of green; and the small windows are neatly draped with curtains and set with boxes of flowers.

The inside of the house is usually very neat and tidy. There is a large stove or oven in the kitchen, and on the whitewashed walls hang many brightly polished utensils; but earthen pots are used for cooking the food. The bedrooms are also very trim and neat, and the Hungarian housewife prides herself upon the softness of her feather beds.

The school-house is, in appearance, very like the other houses of the village, but its walls are hung with maps and pictures. The schoolmaster is paid a small yearly sum by each pupil, and also receives from each household a goose and a fowl; the parents of the children cultivate the master's garden and field.

In the country districts the traveller often meets with an ox-cart going to market. The oxen are fine animals, with silvery white coats and long pointed horns; they have a mild and gentle air and a slow and stately tread.



A VILLAGE IN THE CARPATHIANS.

Or the traveller may often meet a flock of geese driven by a girl with a switch in her hand ; or a large herd of swine ; or a large number of horses with foals yoked four abreast to their mothers ; or a pedlar's cart full of boots and hats piled up in pyramids ; or a cart laden with barrels of wine and sacks of corn on which sit women and girls, in the pretty peasant costumes, which add such a charm to peasant life as seen by the stranger.

On festival days the peasants make themselves very

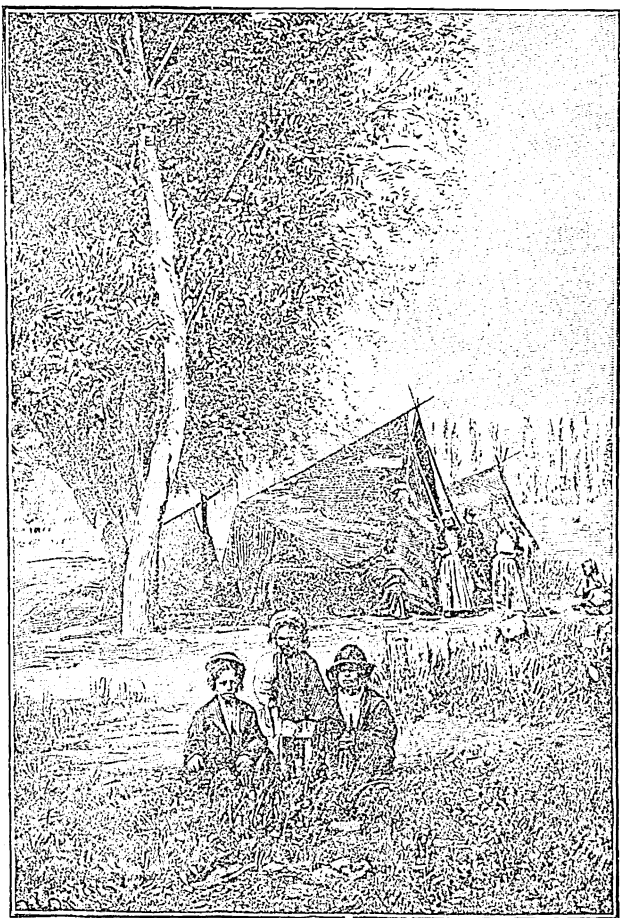
gay. The men wear embroidered coats and vests, and the women are gay with all the colours of the rainbow. A pretty custom among the young girls of some parts is to wear the hair plaited behind, and with one small plait brought round the forehead like a golden crown.

There are in Hungary a very large number of gipsies. Where they came from no one knows, but in this land they are not looked upon with suspicion and disfavour as in other countries of Europe. Here they live their roving life in peace.

Free as a bird, the gipsy roams where he will. He needs only pasture for his horses, wood for his fire, a hare, rabbit, fox, squirrel, or hedgehog for his cooking-pot, tobacco for his pipe, the company of his fellow-wanderers, and a musical instrument of some kind, at the best a violin. As a rule he lives by begging, but sometimes he follows the trade of a tinsmith or horse-dealer or horse-doctor. Many of the Hungarian peasants think that gipsies have powers greater than usual, that they can cure diseases, make the corn grow, and find out wells ; and this belief partly explains why these wanderers are so kindly treated.

The gipsies are very skilful musicians, and a gipsy band is always hired at a peasant festival. The Hungarians are also a musical race, and have great stores of poetic legends and national songs. Their songs tell of the delights of war and the chase, of national glory and disaster, of the joys and sorrows of lovers, and of the dangers and pleasures of the brigand's life ; for there are still many of these bold robbers in the more remote parts of the country.

The language of the Hungarians is very musical, and



A GIPSY ENCAMPMENT.

many of the peasants have very fine voices. Some of them are able to make up musical airs of their own at a few moments' notice ; and they love to get together for

music and dancing. Their national dance is the *czardas*, which is very wild and fiery, like themselves; and it is a common sight to see the peasants in the parlour of a country inn joining with great vigour and enjoyment in this national dance.

Here is part of a pretty little song which the Hungarian peasant woman will sometimes sing to her child :

'Little one, thou must grow—oh! pretty little mouth with pearls!
Thy cradle shall be of rosewood, and the angels will weave threads
from the rainbow for cloth to wrap thee in. A beautiful leaf from
the golden nut-tree shall be thy covering! the evening breeze shall
rock thy cradle! the kiss of a falling star shall awake thee! a soft
breath shall play around thee!'

In the mountain lands of the north of Hungary there are many people of the Slav race, to which the Russians belong. The peasants here are mostly fair-haired, and are very strong and hardy. "It is a grand thing," writes a traveller through this district, "to see a woman of these highlands come along the road into the village, her apron folded up towards the waist, close-kirtled, leaving her free to stride forward like a man, her arms swinging, and probably a rake in her right hand, and a bundle on her back fastened by bands across the chest. Upright, stalwart, energetic, she is a true mother of the hill-men."

The women and girls in this part do not wear the gay colours of the plain-dwellers, but dress usually in white. The men wear leather waistcoats, like breast-plates, and sling their coats on their backs like our Hussars.

In the Austrian province of Moravia there are also many people of Slav race, and here the traveller sees on festal or market days great gaiety in dress among the

peasants. The women wear skirts and bodices of the brightest colours—red, orange, pink, and bright green, and here and there a silver corselet may be seen. The men wear white shirts, gaily-coloured vests embroidered in scarlet and gold, and a dark, sleeveless jacket with gleaming rows of buttons; the hat is almost brimless, embroidered with a wreath of flowers, and has a couple of white cock's feathers at the side. Into this part of Europe at least the sameness of Western civilization has not yet penetrated.

CHAPTER VI.—THE ITALIAN KINGDOM.

1.—A General Survey.

WE speak of Italy as a peninsula, but we must never forget that the most fertile and the busiest part of the Italian kingdom is that which lies north of the peninsula, on the mainland of Europe.

We may divide the surface of Italy into several distinct parts. In the extreme North there are the Southern Alpine slopes, where lie the lakes Maggiore, Garda, and Como, from which flow streams that help to water the fertile plain of Lombardy. Across the mountains there are several passes, which were much used by merchants in the olden days, who, after their toilsome way over the mountains, came down into the paths which wound along the sides of the lakes through scenes of wondrous beauty.

In our time the railways bring travellers and goods from the northern lands into Italy—from France through the Mont Cenis tunnel and by the coast-line round the Gulf of Genoa; from Switzerland and Germany through

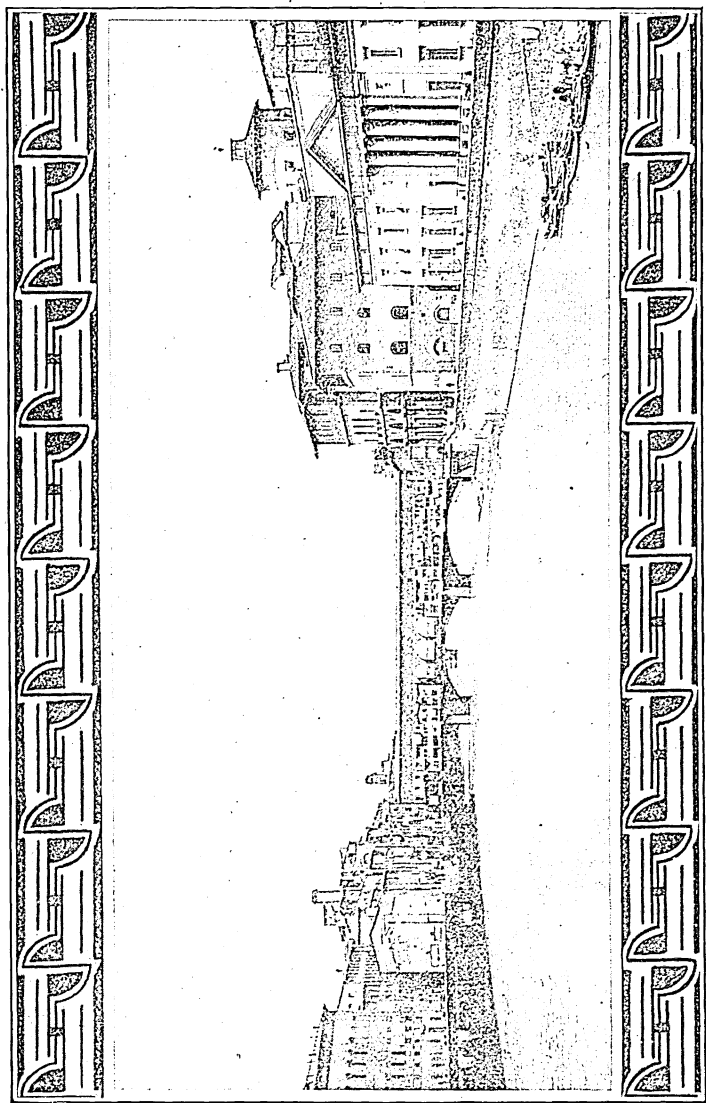
the St. Gothard ; from Austria down the valley of the River Adige.

History tells how in the earliest days the famous soldier Hannibal swept down upon the fertile plains of Northern Italy through the Little St. Bernard Pass. And another famous conqueror of a later day, Napoleon Bonaparte, also chose this most difficult way of entering Italy. In the year 1800 he marched over the Alps by the pass of the Great St. Bernard, and "within six days, with 35,000 men, passed over the rocky, snow-covered barrier, more than 8,000 feet high, and came down like an avalanche on the plains of Italy."

The next natural division of Italy is the Plain of Lombardy, drained towards the east by the rivers Adige and Po and their numerous tributaries. Here we have what has been called for its beauty and fertility "the garden of Europe." A traveller passing by rail through the plain thus describes a few of the sights which he saw :

"The white walls of many a town, with its campanile and battlemented tower, gleamed from amid the rich growth of corn and figs, mulberries, olives and peaches, that covered the plains. Spires and villas crested the adjacent hills, which were clothed with trees. The bright green leaves of the vine climbed and festooned themselves from rock to rock ; the large leaves of the water-melon trailed under the hedges, and the great fruit lay basking in the sun."

Then there is the Apennine mountain system, which forms the main body of the Italian peninsula, and is continued into Sicily after a break at the Strait of Messina. The highest peak in the peninsula is Gran



A VIEW ON THE ARNO, AT FLORENCE.

Sasso, in the central part; but much more interesting are the volcanic cones of Vesuvius, near Naples, and Etna, in Sicily, and those of the Lipari Isles, which have earned for this group the name of "the lighthouse of the Mediterranean."

Vesuvius is not very lofty, but seems higher than it really is, because its whole form can be seen at a glance from the Bay of Naples. It is a regular cone, graceful in outline, with a crater about half a mile across. Looking over the lip of this great bowl one can see a large opening, from which come choking sulphur fumes and, at intervals, showers of red-hot stones and melted rock or lava.

Many people go up the mountain to look down the crater. The trip is not without its dangers. The ground near the edge of the bowl is so hot that one cannot stand in the same place for a few seconds together. The air is full of the fumes of burning sulphur, and all around small puffs of steam shoot out from holes in the ground. Within, the sides of the crater are at a white heat, and there is a continuous roar as of a mighty furnace. From the sides of the mountain there often come streams of lava pouring down the slope and into the plain below like rivers of fire.

In the days of long ago two cities, Pompeii and Herculaneum, which lay at the base of the mountain, were overwhelmed in a great eruption of Vesuvius. For hundreds of years these cities lay beneath the hardened bed of lava; but they have now been to a great extent excavated, and one can now see the old streets and houses in which, 2,000 years ago, the people lived without a thought of danger. We can read of them and of the

great disaster which fell upon them in Lytton's novel, "The Last Days of Pompeii."

Etna, the great volcano of Sicily, is more than twice as high as Vesuvius, and here we can see a snow-crowned summit from which issue clouds of smoke. This is the workshop of Vulcan, the fire-god of the ancients, who made the thunderbolts. The lower slopes of Etna and other mountains of Northern Sicily are well wooded and well watered, and in the beautiful valleys and on the hillsides the shepherds of ancient days fed their flocks and herds and played on their pipes, as the old poets loved to tell. "Sweet are the voices of the calves," sings one, "and sweet the heifer's lowing; sweet plays the shepherd on the shepherd's pipe, and sweet is the echo."

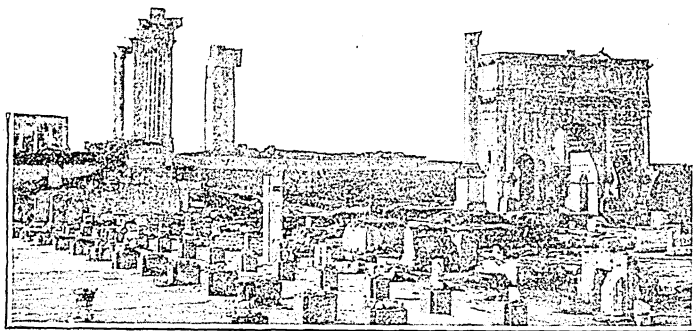
The climate of Italy is very warm: the winter is mild, and in Sicily like a balmy English spring. But in the coast plains to the east and west of the Apennines a kind of fever known as malaria is common, and kills large numbers of people every year. Wide districts of these parts of Italy are thus made quite useless, except in winter, when they are used as pasture lands, although the soil is very fertile, and could be made highly productive. South of the Plain of Lombardy the rivers of Italy are not very useful, many of them being mere dry, stony beds in summer, and artificial watering is necessary in most parts of the country.

The coast of Italy is more than three times as long as her land frontier, and all parts of the country are under the influence of the sea. For the most part the coast is bold and rocky, except in the Northern part of the Adriatic and on the West, opposite the island of Corsica; and there are many excellent harbours, which in ancient

days were scenes of busy trade. In those early times Italy lay in the middle of the world, for "the world" then meant the countries round about the Mediterranean Sea. The Atlantic Ocean is now the greatest highway of trade, but the ports of Italy lie very near the route of steamships bound for the Far East by way of the Suez Canal; in fact, many of these great liners put into the beautiful Bay of Naples on their way eastward.

The island of Corsica, to the west of Italy, belongs to France, and contains the birthplace of Napoleon Bonaparte.

Sardinia is part of the Italian kingdom. It is a rocky island covered largely with forests, and having a rather unpleasant climate, the lower parts being subject to malaria. Elba is interesting as the place of imprisonment of Napoleon. He spent about one year here as "Emperor of Elba," and then made his escape to fight his last great battle on the field of Waterloo.



RUINS OF THE FORUM.

2.—Resources and Towns.

The climate and soil of Italy make the country specially suited for land culture. In many parts of this favoured land the soil will yield several crops in the year. Yet Italy is by no means a flourishing agricultural country. The people do not make so much of the land as they might, and, as we have already noted, the presence of malaria makes large parts of the country unfit to live in.

The most productive part of the land is, of course, the Plain of Lombardy, where wheat, maize, and rice are largely grown. Here the ground is well watered, but artificial watering is also needed to make the rice grow.

Large districts in Italy are given up to the growth of the olive-tree, and olive-oil stands among the leading exports of the country. This oil is also an important item in the food of the people. Oranges and lemons are also largely grown, and Italy comes next to France for the growth of the vine. Wine is therefore cheap, and forms the common drink of the people, as in France. The mulberry-tree seems to be everywhere, and the chestnut is very largely grown, and used as food in a variety of ways.

Italy has a certain amount of mineral wealth, but coal is wanting. In the volcanic districts there are great quantities of sulphur, and this article is largely exported. There are fine marbles quarried at various places, the most famous being Carrara, near the Gulf of Genoa, whence came the great blocks of stone from which the famous sculptor Michael Angelo carved his wonderful statues. One of these was the statue of David, the

shepherd King of Israel, which he carved for the people of Florence. This beautiful city on the Arno is famous, like so many Italian cities, for its works of art of various kinds, its picture-galleries, sculptured tombs, and statues, upon which the merchants of the Middle Ages spent a great deal of their wealth.

This is the city in which Dante, the famous Italian poet, spent his youth. In the fields outside roamed the shepherd boy who afterwards became the great painter Giotto. And here Michael Angelo was taught to use the chisel with which he carved his way to world-wide fame. Some of his best work in marble was carried out for the tombs of great Florentines in one of the churches of the city.

Venice, at the head of the Adriatic, was once the leading trading centre of Southern Europe. She controlled the coasts and waters of the Eastern Mediterranean, and the Adriatic Sea was regarded as her property. Overland to this city came the trade of Central Europe, and through Venice passed the merchandise of the East to Northern lands. After a while the Turks got possession of South-Eastern Europe, and spoilt the trade of Venice; and by this time traders had found a sea route to India and the Far East by the Cape of Good Hope.

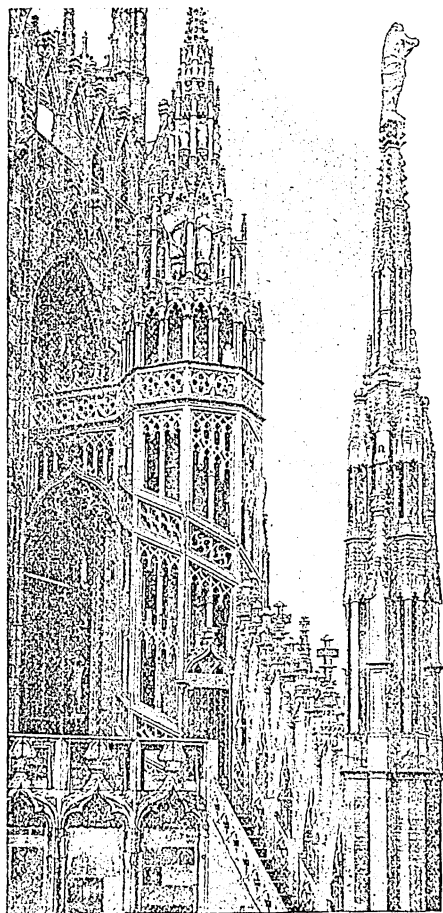
So Venice lost her proud position. But her beautiful palaces, towers, and churches remain as monuments of her past greatness; and the city is thronged every year with visitors from other lands, who come to see her canals and gondolas, her splendid cathedral of St. Mark, her pictures, sculptures, and other works of art.

Having so little coal, the Italians have not many

manufactures, but Milan, Turin, and Bologna, in the North, are busy industrial centres. The Italians make a good deal of straw plait for hats, and the seaport of

Leghorn has given its name to a certain kind of this article. They are also very clever, like the French, at making fancy articles, and turn out a good deal of fine pottery, glass, and ornaments.

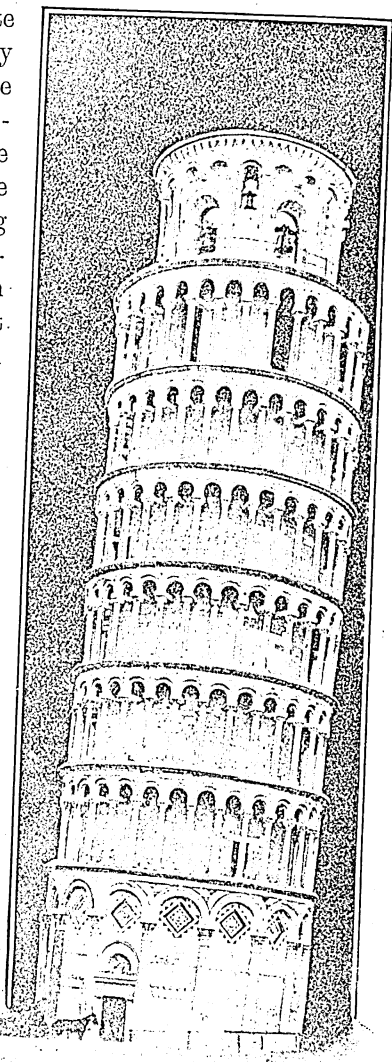
But to people from other lands the Italian towns are chiefly interesting, not from their size or present-day importance, but because of their beauty of situation, their glorious churches and other buildings. At Milan is a splendid cathedral, covered on the outside with statues and rich sculptures, with



A PORTION OF MILAN CATHEDRAL.

needle-like spires of white marble rising at every corner. At Pisa, on the Arno, there is the wonderful leaning tower, the foundation of which gave way when it was being built. The builder, instead of pulling down what had been built, went on with the work, and built the tower so well that, though it leans to one side, it is still, after six centuries, quite strong and firm.

Verona, on the Adige, brings to our minds thoughts of Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*. "Pleasant Verona," writes Charles Dickens, the famous novelist, "with its beautiful old palaces and charming country in the distance; with its Roman gates still spanning the fair street; with its marble-filled churches, lofty towers, rich architecture, and quaint old quiet streets;



THE LEANING TOWER OF PISA

with its fast-rushing river, picturesque old bridges, great castle and waving cypresses, and prospect so delightful."

And what can we say of Rome, the "Eternal City," once the mistress of the world, now the capital of modern Italy and the home of the Popes? All the history of Europe seems to centre round this wonderful city, which is built on seven hills by the banks of the "yellow Tiber."

Here is the great domed church of St. Peter, one of the wonders of the world for richness and grandeur; the ruined Coliseum, in which the gladiators of old Rome used to fight with wild beasts, and in which so many Christian martyrs have met their death under the eyes of hundreds of holiday-makers; the Forum, where the ancient Romans met for public business and to hold courts of law; the Vatican, the home of the Pope, with its endless halls and galleries filled with the finest works of ancient art, its libraries, museums, chapels, and lovely gardens.

Naples, on a wide bay near Vesuvius, is famed for the beauty of its situation.* But we must not forget that it is the chief city and port of modern Italy, and much larger than the capital. There are other thriving ports along the Western coast, one of the busiest being Genoa, through which passes a good deal of the trade of Central

* "Vedi Napoli, poi Mori," runs a well-known Italian proverb, whose local signification is perhaps not familiar to many who have occasion to quote it in the literal translation: "See Naples, then die." As it happens, however, there is a picturesque village called Mori, near Naples, and the proverb is only a punning suggestion to "see Naples, then Mori."

Europe since the making of the railway tunnels through the Alps.

The railway-line through the Mont Cenis tunnel and through Turin and Bologna runs to Brindisi, whence mail-steamers start for India. This line is a part of the overland route to the East, by which people may avoid a long sea journey round the south of Spain.

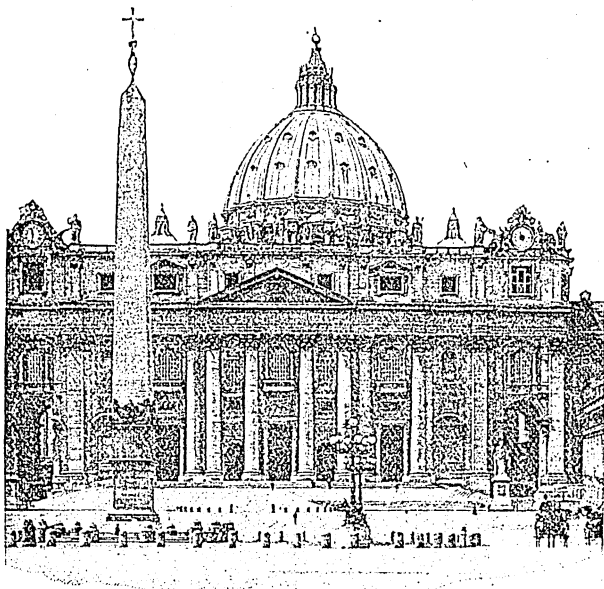
3.—A Glance at Italian History.

The sea and the mountains cut off Italy from the rest of Europe almost as completely as our own islands are separated from the mainland. And we might expect that Italy, like Britain, would have a separate national history—a story of a united people under one sovereign. But it is not so. The history of Italy is the history of a number of separate States which were nearly always at strife with each other; and the united Italy of the present day dates only from the year 1870, so that among the nations of Europe Italy is very young indeed.

You may remember how Charlemagne was crowned in Rome by the Pope as "Emperor of the Romans," and how the idea of his time was that he should rule with the Pope the whole of the civilized world. We have noted how France and Spain and other smaller parts of Europe broke away from this Empire and became separate States under their own rulers; and in time the Holy Roman Empire came to include only Italy and the German lands north of the Alps.

This unnatural union was a bad thing for Germany and a bad thing for Italy. The Popes went on crowning one German monarch after another as Emperor of the

Romans, but this monarch's empire was a very shadowy thing. Both Germany and Italy became divided into a number of petty States, whose rulers cared little for the head of the Holy Roman Empire. As a result, there was



ST. PETER'S CATHEDRAL AT ROME.

no real Germany and no real Italy until Napoleon finally put an end to the Holy Roman Empire, and so cut off the countries north of the Alps from the States of Italy once and for ever.

But there was much fighting and bloodshed before the Italian States were united under one king, with the ancient city of Rome as the capital of his new kingdom.

At the same time that Germany was rallying round Prussia the Italian States were gradually uniting under the leadership of the King of Sardinia, who ruled not only the island of that name, but also part of the mainland north of the Gulf of Genoa. The great rival of Prussia was the Hapsburg House of Austria, as we have seen; and it was chiefly with Austria that the people of Italy had to fight to make their country free and united.

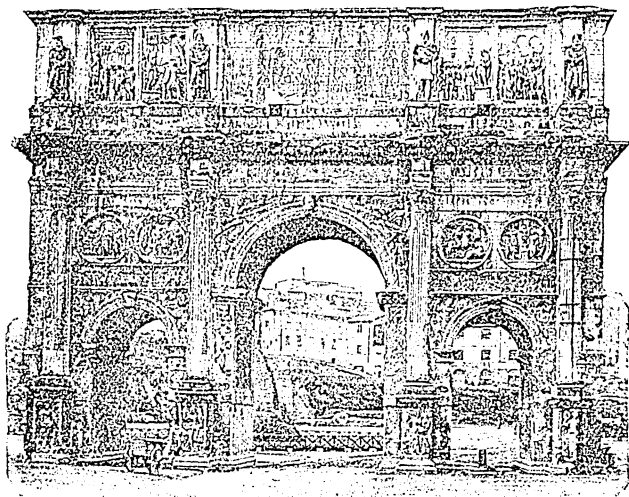
Austria held the Northern States of Venice and Lombardy, and other parts of Italy were ruled by Hapsburg princes. The States held by the Pope were under the influence of Austria, and so also was the kingdom of Naples. Sardinia was very weak in comparison, but though Italy was divided on the map, she had made up her mind to be one

One party of Italians wanted a republic, another a united Italy under the Pope; a third wished for a kingdom, like that of our country, under the King of Sardinia. The last party was victorious, and the three men to whom Italy owes its unity were King Victor Emmanuel of Sardinia, Count Cavour, his chief minister, and the soldier Garibaldi.

Victor Emmanuel began his work by making Sardinia into a monarchy like that of Great Britain. He set up a Parliament, and worked hard to make his kingdom a model for what Italy might be. His great helper in this work, Count Cavour, thought our country was the pattern State, and he visited London many times; he was often to be seen in the Strangers' Gallery of the House of Commons listening intently to the debates, and watching keenly all the doings of the "Mother of Parliaments"; and it was owing to his unceasing labour

and his wisdom that the people of Sardinia obtained just and liberal laws like our own.

The life of Garibaldi, the Italian patriot, reads like a romance. It is a story of stirring adventures, of hair-breadth escapes from peril by land and water, of great success as a leader and a soldier, of a life spent gladly



THE ARCH OF CONSTANTINE.

and unselfishly in one great cause—the freedom and unification of Italy.

Count Cavour's plan was to gain the help of France in the struggle with Austria, and in 1859 he was able to do so, and the allies defeated the Austrians in two great battles. Then peace was made, and Sardinia gained a great part of Lombardy, while at the same time several

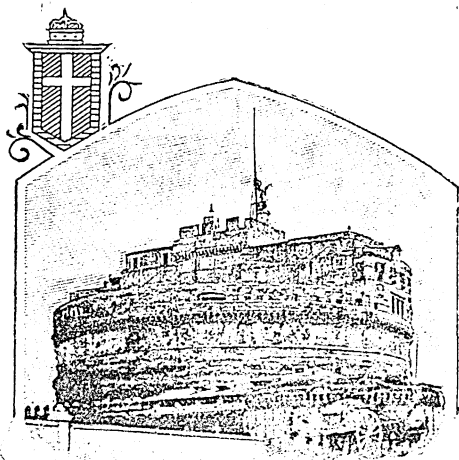
of the smaller Italian States united themselves of their own free will with her.

Then in 1860 Garibaldi led an army of volunteers into Sicily, at that time part of the kingdom of Naples, and took possession of the island. Next he crossed to Naples itself, and entered the city in triumph. Marching northward, he met Victor Emmanuel, whom he hailed as King of Italy. In the next year the first Parliament of Italy met at Turin, and the coveted title was granted to the Sardinian monarch. But the Venetian State in the North-East, as well as the States in the centre, ruled over by the Pope, still remained outside the new kingdom.

In 1866 Austria was fighting with Prussia. Victor Emmanuel joined the Prussians, and so won Venetia. The capital of Italy was now at Florence, but the Italians were anxious to make Rome their royal city. The Pope, however, was supported by France, and though Garibaldi twice tried to take the city, he was not successful.

Then France came to blows with Germany, and the French troops were withdrawn from Rome. An Italian army entered the city, and the people by vote chose Victor Emmanuel as their King. The papal States became part of the kingdom of Italy, and so at last the country was united under one monarch, with his capital at Rome.

Then began the work of building up the nation and making it a Power among the rest of the European States. It was difficult work and costly work, and heavy taxes have had to be placed upon the people. As a result, the people of Italy are very poor, and large numbers emigrate to other lands.



THE CASTLE OF ST. ANGELO, ROME.

4.—Life in Italy—I.

Italy, then, until forty years ago, was a geographical name applied to a number of provinces and States governed by various rulers, some of whom were not even Italians. If we imagine the Northern counties of England to be under Austrian rule, the Midland counties and London to be under the rule of a bishop, supported on his throne by foreign armies, and the southern portion of our islands to be in the hands of the Spaniards, we shall realize what Italy was before the Italians rose up in arms and drove the foreigners beyond her frontiers, in order to form themselves into a united country, with the head of the House of Savoy—the oldest Royal House in Europe—as their king.

It is not very easy for English people to understand the various elements which make up the Italian nation.

In the first place, an altogether false impression of Italians is apt to be given by emigrants who come to this country and settle in the poorest quarters of London and other big towns, where the majority of them grind organs or make ice-cream. In reality, the Italians in their own country are, as a rule, the very opposite to the usual ideas which the majority of English people entertain concerning them. While they are at work there are no harder workers in the world than the Italian labourers, both agricultural and mechanics. They have the advantage also of being sober and thrifty.

During the forty years in which Italy has been a united monarchy, the Italians have succeeded in raising their country to be one of the most important of the European Powers; and it is evident that none but an energetic and vigorous race could, in so short a time, have done so much for itself. Those, therefore, who describe the Italians as being lazy, good-for-nothing people do not know them at home, or in South America, where another Italy is rising up, which bids fair some day to become richer and more powerful than the mother country.

Of course, every country has its own habits and customs, and these are generally suited to its requirements. In Italy, not only do the habits and customs of the people differ largely from those of English people, but they also differ in each part of Italy itself.

In England, for instance, everybody talks English, and a Londoner would not have any great difficulty in understanding a Yorkshireman. In Italy, on the other hand, a man from Milan and a man from Venice would not understand a word of each other's natural language.

Both would be Italians, but neither, if they were men of the people, would naturally speak the Italian tongue. Even among the upper classes in parts of Italy, such as Piedmont, Lombardy and Venetia, Italian is only spoken out of courtesy to a stranger ; and in all parts it is taught in the infant-schools as if it were another language. In Tuscany and the Roman provinces the pure Italian language is spoken by all classes.

As each province of Italy has its different dialect, which in most cases cannot be understood outside that province or district, so the habits, characters, and modes of life of Italians differ considerably in the respective parts of the peninsula. The life of the agricultural labourer and the small farmer is everywhere in Italy a very hard one. Although manufactures and commercial undertakings are increasing throughout the country, agriculture must always remain one of the chief industries, owing to the extraordinary fertility of the land. The agricultural classes, however, suffer severely from local taxation, which in some districts has led to emigration to foreign countries of countless families unable to make a living at home. In centres such as Milan, Turin, and other towns in the North the people are much more prosperous than in the South.

Italy is full of mineral wealth, which, however, can only be worked at great expense, owing to there being scarcely any coal-fields in the country. The cost of imported coal, of course, adds largely to the expense of working the machinery necessary for mining industry.

The Italians, however, are very clever at all scientific work ; and in the uses to which they put electricity they are far ahead of England or of any other country. It

is no uncommon thing in Italy to see mere hovels in which peasants reside lighted with the electric light ; and there is scarcely a town, or even village, of any dimensions the streets of which are not considerably better lighted by electricity than those of London. The Italians are also good engineers and builders ; and some of the most difficult feats of railway engineering in Europe have been carried out by Italian engineers and Italian navvies.

In old days the Italians were an artistic people, and their painters, sculptors and musicians were among the greatest who have ever existed ; while their literature influenced the greatest writers of all countries, chief among whom we find our own Shakespeare. The modern Italians, however, appear to have lost their leading place in literature and art, and to have become foremost in scientific and practical knowledge.

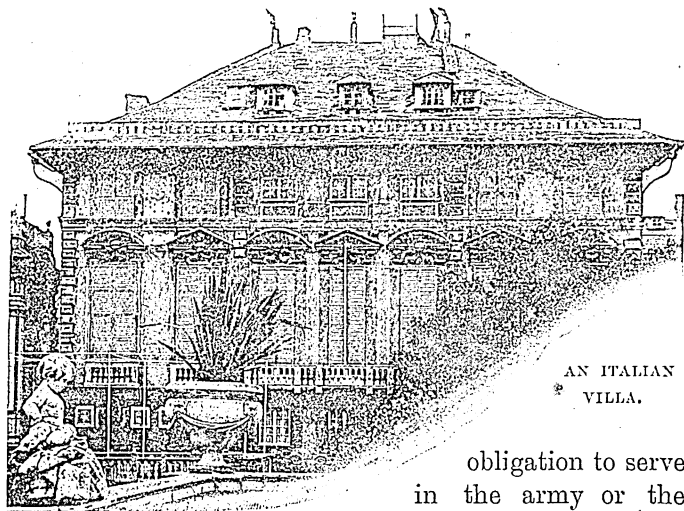
The government of Italy has been largely modelled on that of England. The Parliament is elected by the people, and the Sovereign is a constitutional monarch, who governs by the advice of his Ministers. The Roman Catholic religion is the State religion of the country, although all creeds are protected and recognised by law.

The Pope has the position in Italy of an independent sovereign. He has his own Court in Rome at the Vatican, to which all the Great Powers of the world, except England and the United States, send ambassadors ; he has his own troops, his own postal and telegraphic service, and his palaces are foreign territory, in which the Italian Government has no jurisdiction.

English people often forget that the kingdom of Italy is little more than half a century old, and they expect

the Italians to have accomplished in fifty years what it has taken England a thousand years to effect. The nation has had to be educated—to be sent to school—in order to learn how to be a really great country.

One of the greatest blessings to Italy has been the



AN ITALIAN
VILLA.

obligation to serve in the army or the navy for two or three years. Formerly the young men never left their own villages, and grew up ignorant men. In these days the average Italian soldier or sailor compares favourably with those of any other country; and, indeed, in some things, such as being sober and orderly when off duty, he could teach our soldiers and sailors many good lessons. At the end of their military service these young men return to their homes, well-disciplined and well-educated members of society, instead of rough village lads.

5.—Life in Italy—II.

As in every country, the home-life of Italians differs according to the social position of the family. In country places boys and girls are sent to the infant-school at a very early age, as their parents are generally working people who could not give them proper attention at home during the day. It is a common custom in Italy for several families to live together under the same roof, though on different floors, taking their meals together in order to reduce expense. Like the French, and, indeed, every other nationality save the English, Italians are very rarely wasteful of food; and many an Italian family would live well for a week on appetizing dishes made of remnants which in England would be thrown away. Meat is dear in Italy, and many Italians of the poorer classes do not eat it except on a Sunday or a saint's day. Soup, macaroni, rice, cheese, and a kind of heavy cake, made of maize and called *polenta*, form their usual diet during the winter months; and in summer vegetables and fruit are largely consumed. Wine is within the means of the poorest, and even little children drink red or white wine at their meals.

Italians do not, as a rule, amuse themselves at home as English people do. The men and boys go out to a café in the evenings, where they sit and talk over a glass of wine or a cup of coffee, or play games of cards with each other. On Sundays and holidays the whole family goes out together to the theatre, or to whatever places of amusement the town provides. In general the population is quiet and orderly, but in many parts, though not in all parts of Italy, the people are excitable. and a

trifling dispute often ends by blood being spilled. Out-of-door games and athletics are being much encouraged, and football is played in many places.

Italians are, naturally much fonder of out-door exercises than most Continental people, and Turin, Milan, Rome, Naples, and other towns have their gymnasiums and rowing-clubs. Shooting and riding are much indulged in by the wealthier classes. Girls, however, do not take part in these pastimes. They are brought up to mind household duties; and in Italy the two sexes do not mix with each other as they do in this country.

Poverty in every class is the enemy which modern Italy has to fight against. There is, of course, a fair proportion of rich men in the country, but the working classes and the official classes are poor and ill-paid compared with those in Northern countries.

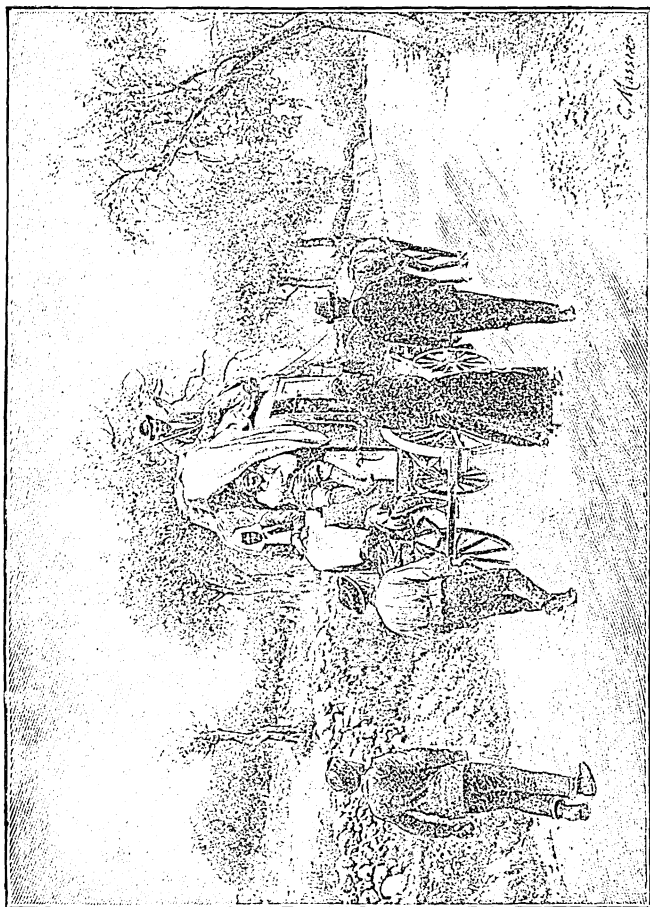
The Italian Government adds some millions* of pounds sterling a year to its revenues by the State Lottery. Every Saturday in the chief cities of Italy a series of numbers are drawn from a vessel in which they have been previously placed. These numbers are drawn in public by a little child, who is blindfolded in order to prevent any possible fraud. Those who have bought tickets on which the winning numbers are printed may gain very large sums. But, naturally, by far the larger numbers that have been played upon do not come out, and thus the State wins the money which has been staked upon them. These lotteries used to exist in England, but are now illegal. Nothing, however, would prevent the Italian people from gambling, and, if money is to be lost in so foolish a way, it is perhaps better for

the people that the State should be the gainer of it. The present system of State lottery in Italy was invented by a priest, who was of the opinion that it reduced an evil which no laws of the State or the Church could ever suppress.

One of the things which modern Italy sadly lacks is any law by which the very poor are provided for. In Italy private charity alone concerns itself with paupers. Consequently there are no workhouses, nothing to correspond to our English Poor Law Guardians. The laws which forbid begging in the street in Italy are, therefore, practically useless. Vast sums of money have in all ages been left by charitable Italians to endow institutions in which the sick and aged poor should be cared for; but the country is not yet rich enough to allow the Government to levy taxes for the poor, as we can afford to do in England.

We are often told that Italians are cruel to animals, and certainly horses and mules in Italy are sometimes terribly overladen and worked when in an unfit state. Education, however, is rapidly teaching the Italian peasants and workmen that every man has a duty to the animals which have been placed in his charge. The clergy, too, are beginning to preach humanity to the lower animals, and these are being better treated than was formerly the case.

The average Italian has too much natural refinement to be wilfully cruel; and spectacles such as a Spanish bull-fight, or even certain barbarities which are practised under the name of sport in this country, would excite universal disgust in Italy.



G. Massieu

CHAPTER VII.—THE RUSSIAN EMPIRE.

1.—European Russia—a General Survey.

FROM the Baltic Sea, right across Eurasia to the shores of the Pacific Ocean, from the Arctic coasts to the Northern frontier of India stretches the great empire of the Tsar of all the Russias. In area it is equal to four-fifths that of the British Empire, and it covers about two-thirds of Europe, and more than one-third of Asia. Let us consider in turn the European and the Asiatic parts of this great empire.

Russia in Europe is a wide plain which touches the sea at four quarters, and yet has no good ports, as we have already seen (see Chapters I. and II.). It has a large number of slow and sluggish rivers, but many of them are only useful as waterways during the summer months.

From the Austrian frontier there stretches to the north-east a broad belt of very fertile land, called the Black Zone, because of the rich dark soil found in it. Here are the farm lands of European Russia, which provide work for the greater number of the peasants. Here also are most of the trading and manufacturing towns of Russia in Europe, and the densest population. The Black Zone stretches across the Urals right into the southern part of Siberia.

To the north of this Black Zone there is a belt of forest lands which are a source of great wealth to the country. Still farther north are the cold Arctic lands, which are only thinly peopled by hunters, fishers and breeders of reindeer. To the north-west of the White Sea live the

Lapps and Finns, to the north-east the wandering Samoyedes.

Russia has a very wide lake district in the north-west. The largest sheets of fresh-water in Europe belong to this region, and the whole of Finland is covered with lakes, lagoons, and marshes. These waters are frozen over for about one-third of the year, and a kind of seal is often seen on the ice of Lake Ladoga, which is also well stocked with fish. From this lake flows the River Neva, on the banks of which Peter the Great built his new capital; this river carries to the sea as much water as the Rhine and the Rhone together.

South of the Black Zone are the wide, treeless plains known as the steppes. Part of these could be cultivated, though the soil is not very good; other parts consist of sandy tracts of barren land. This region, being far removed from the influence of the sea, has an extreme climate, very hot in summer, very cold in winter.

Over the grass lands of the steppes roam large herds of cattle. These pasture lands of the great plain are not without beauty in spring and early summer. The grass is then of a vivid green, and is set with countless flowers of many kinds and colours. The air is full of the songs of birds, and musical with running water. But, as summer advances, the flowers wither, the grass is burnt up by the hot sun, the ponds dry up, and large numbers of cattle die for want of water.

During the long winter the steppes are swept by fierce storms, which cover the land with drifted snow and fill up every hollow in the ground. Then when this snow begins to melt the wide plains are turned into dreary stretches of mud and slush. Gradually the water finds

its way to the streams, and then, as if at the touch of an enchanter's wand, the ground in many parts is covered with green grass and wild flowers—crocuses, hyacinths, and many others of great beauty.

In the South-East of European Russia is the lofty region of the "frosty Caucasus," which has many snow-clad peaks and many great glaciers. Here is a fine description of the view from Elbruz, the highest mountain of this great range :

"The heaven overhead is of a deep blue; the neighbouring snows are dazzlingly white; as the range recedes the peaks shine golden, until, on the horizon, the farthest crests and the thin streaks of clouds take a rich amber tint, shading off into a faint sunrise pink. About our solitary peak all is still and silent, save for the lapping of little waves of warm air that rise up to us from the valleys, the far-off murmur of falling torrents, and the momentary roar of avalanches as they plunge from the frozen cliffs of *névé* into the hidden depths of the glaciers. . . .

"From the dusky doors of the glaciers rivers flash, full-grown, into life, and our eyes follow their course in either direction, north or south, as they linger for a time in broad forest basins, or grassy trenches at the foot of the snows; and gather their tributaries before battling a way out through deep ravines and a maze of foothills to the distant steppe, or the dim surface of the Black Sea."*

An interesting portion of Southern Russia is the peninsula which helps to cut off the Sea of Azov from

* "The Exploration of the Caucasus," by D. W. Freshfield (Edward Arnold).



A CAUCASIAN WEARING NATIONAL DRESS.

the Black Sea. The northern part of the peninsula is steppe-land, but the south is warm and sunny with a very fertile soil. Here the people are of Tartar race, and live in small villages often built into the side of a hill. They grow the mulberry, walnut, and lime trees, as well as a good deal of tobacco and many kinds of fruit, which need a good deal of warmth to make them ripe.

2.—European Russia—Occupations and Towns.

The cultivation of the soil is the chief work of the people of Russia; and the best farms are to be found in the centre and South-West. This country ranks next to France among European lands as a grower of wheat. But the farm-workers do not feed on white bread, as so many of the French people do. Rye-bread—sour, dark in colour, and not very wholesome—is their chief food, and a huge quantity of the wheat is sent to other lands. The flour from Russian wheat is used by our millers to blend with other flours; it is what they call “strong.”

Odessa, on the Black Sea, is one of the chief ports of Russia, and its leading export is wheat. This city, like St. Petersburg, is quite modern, and owes its rise to its nearness to the wheat-fields of South-Western Russia. It has a good, safe harbour, and the town is well built with broad, open streets and handsome houses and offices.

We also get a good deal of Russian grain from Riga, on the Baltic; but our trade with this port is stopped for several months of each year by the ice. This town also sends us a great deal of flax for making linen, and hemp for making rope, which are largely grown in Western

Russia ; and a large quantity of timber from the wide forests of the North of Russia.

These forests are a source of great wealth to Russia. They provide the timber of which most of the village houses are built, and they also furnish such useful things as tar, potash, resin, and turpentine. All these things are exported to countries like our own which have no large stretches of forest land.

Russia is making great advances in manufactures. There are coal-fields in the basins of the Oka and the Donetz, as well as in Finland and Poland ; and this is being used in the factories of such towns as Moscow and Tula, in Central Russia, Lodz, in Poland, and Kharkoff, near the Donetz.

Moscow is the old capital of Russia, and lies right in the heart of the country. So we find that it is a great centre of inland trade, to which run roads and railways from all parts. The Kremlin, in the middle of the city, is the old royal residence, and consists of a number of churches, palaces, and barracks, surrounded by fortifications, the whole forming a striking pile of buildings crowned with a number of cupolas, such as are to be seen on most churches in Russia.

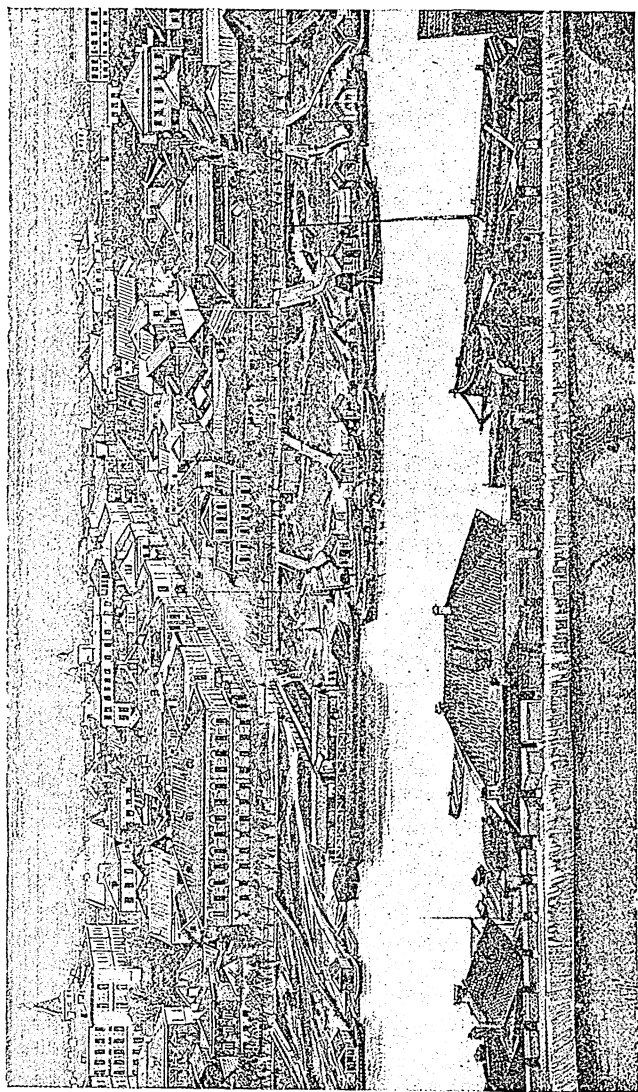
The newer capital, St. Petersburg, is built on a number of islands at the mouth of the Neva. It is not a healthy city, owing to being built on a swamp, but it is very busy and imposing. Its streets are wide ; its business houses and public buildings are like palaces. Here is the splendid Winter Palace of the Tsar ; the glorious Cathedral of St. Isaac, with its brightly-burnished domes ; the Public Library, the third largest in the world ; and the Hermitage, a museum and gallery which contains a

large number of pictures by the greatest painters of Europe. Round about the city there are parks, pleasure gardens, and the stately homes of Russian nobles. St. Petersburg has about one-third of the whole of the sea trade of Russia, but the carrying work is chiefly done in foreign ships, mostly British.

Though the sea trade of Russia is hampered by want of ice-free ports, there is a great deal of overland trade, for the country has, besides its useful streams, a network of railways which join together all the large towns. One of the most interesting inland trading towns is Nijni Novgorod, which lies at the junction of the Oka with the Volga. Between the angle formed by the two streams lies a wide plain on which there is held each year a large fair, where merchants from all parts of Europe and Asia meet together with their wares of numerous kinds.

The rivers are full of boats of all shapes and sizes, which have found their way from the Caspian by way of the Volga with the wares of Central Asia—shawls, carpets, skins, fruits; from the Baltic with goods from the factories of Western Europe; from the borders of Siberia, by way of the Kama, with Chinese tea, furs, and iron. Another town at which busy fairs are held is Kharkoff, in Southern Russia.

Not long ago a railway was built from Moscow to Archangel, on the shores of the White Sea. This town does a good deal of sea trade during the few summer months that its port is open to shipping. One of its chief exports is oil, extracted from fish caught on these coasts, and there are great saw-mills near the town, from which large quantities of plank timber are sent out.



A VIEW OF NIJNI NOVGOROD.

The building of the railway is expected to increase the trade of Archangel very largely.

Astrakhan, at the mouth of the Volga, has a great deal of trade with Central Asia; and through this city passes much of the merchandise for the great fair at Novgorod. Another Russian port on this inland sea is Baku, the great centre of the petroleum industry. It is an ancient city of the Persians, but to the visitor of the present day its chief feature is the large number of oil-wells, with the tall, pyramid-shaped erections above them. The oil is collected in cisterns, and then refined and run into tank-cars, in which it is carried away by rail.

Baku stands at the end of a railway which runs from the shore of the Sea of Azov. And on the other side of the Caspian, just opposite, a railway begins which runs to a terminus very near the frontier of Afghanistan. From a military point of view these lines are very important, as a little thought and study of the map will soon show. Much of the oil from Baku is sent away by another line, which runs to Batum, at the eastern end of the Black Sea.

The westernmost part of European Russia is known as Poland, and once formed part of a separate kingdom, with its capital at Warsaw, on the Vistula. The Poles stoutly resisted the forces of Russia and Prussia, but all their heroism could not prevent the downfall of their kingdom. Warsaw is an old and interesting city, full of memories of a heroic past, but also full of life and activity, and will one day become one of the greatest trading and manufacturing centres of Europe.

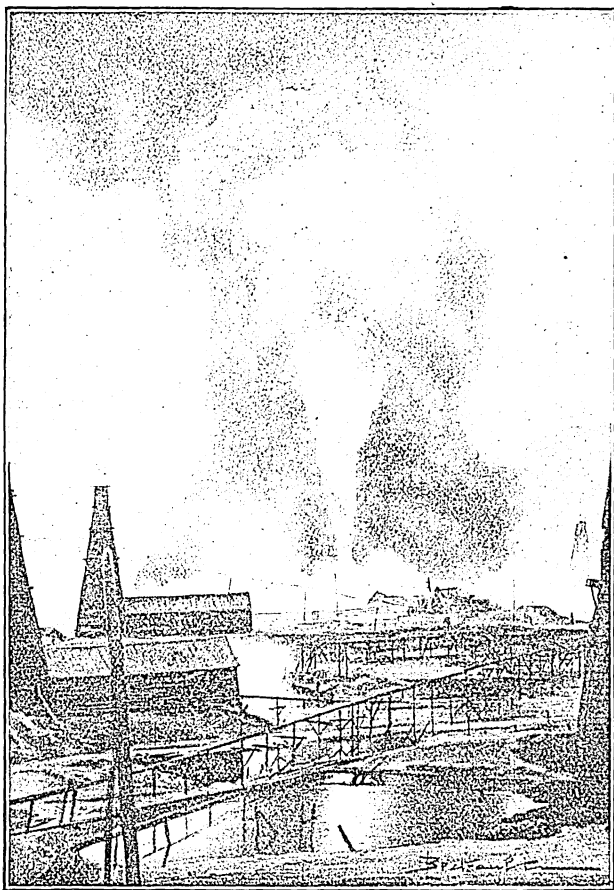
3.—A Glance at Russian History.

Up to the beginning of the eighteenth century Russia was known to most English people as Muscovy, and the people of the country as Muscovites, whose chief city was at Moscow. To the Western nations the Muscovites were for a long time outlandish people, cut off from all civilization.

It was about the time of Shakespeare that we first began to have any dealings with Muscovy. Two English explorers, Richard Chancellor and Sir Hugh Willoughby, set out in 1553 to find a northern sea route to India and China. They sailed past the North Cape, and entered the icy seas, where Willoughby and a large number of the sailors perished of cold. But Chancellor pushed on and landed on the northern coast of Russia.

From the shore of the White Sea he made his way to Moscow, where he was kindly received by the Emperor, or Tsar, of the Russians, Ivan, who for his savagery and cruelty was known as "the Terrible." This monarch granted certain privileges to English traders in Russia; and trading centres, then called factories, were set up by Englishmen in various parts of the country, the chief trade being in furs. There is an interesting description of the Russian Tsar and his people in "The Discovery of Muscovy," by Richard Hakluyt, who wrote accounts of the voyages and discoveries of the time of Elizabeth.

Tsar Ivan now sent an ambassador to Queen Elizabeth, and it was his ardent wish "that the Queen's Majesty and he might be to all their enemies joined as one, and that England and Russland might be in all manners as



PETROLEUM WELLS AT BAKU.

Peter bent all his energies on obtaining a port on the Baltic, whose coasts were in the hands of the Swedes, then a powerful nation. This brought on war with

Charles XII. of Sweden, one of the greatest generals of history. At first the Swedes were successful, but Peter learnt many useful lessons from his defeats. Before long he gained control of the Neva, and after several successes completely defeated the Swedes at Poltava in 1709. By a treaty signed some years afterwards Russia obtained the Baltic provinces, which she had coveted since the time of Ivan the Terrible.

On the banks of the Neva Peter then built the city of Petersburg, which became the capital of the country, and was defended on the seaward side by a strong fortress named Kronstadt. On the Caspian Sea Peter also obtained a port when he took Baku, a city famous for its oil-springs, from the Persians. The great Tsar died in 1725. "All Russia seems his monument," writes a historian. "He added six provinces to her dominions, gave her an outlet upon two seas, a regular army, a fleet, and a naval academy, and, besides these, galleries of painting, and sculpture, and libraries."

Russia now had become part of Europe, and took her share in the great wars which were fought before the boundaries of the States were settled as they stand to-day. The country was invaded by Napoleon Bonaparte in 1812, but the great general entered Moscow to find it deserted by its people. Not long after a fire broke out, and in six days the city was little more than a heap of ruins.

Then began that terrible winter journey across the snowy plains of Russia, when Napoleon lost the greater part of his *Grande Armée* from privation and from the attacks of the Cossack horsemen. Near the frontier Napoleon left his men, and made his way with a few

attendants back to Paris. So ended the great Russian expedition of the French Emperor.

The Tsar Alexander II. is chiefly remembered because he set free the Russian serfs, or peasants, who before his time were really slaves, and used to be sold in public like the negroes of North America in the olden days.

Russia is now a great and powerful country, and one of the leading nations of the world. It differs from the other Great Powers of Europe in being ruled, not by a Parliament, but by a monarch under the advice of a Council, of which the members are not elected by the people. So we speak of the Tsar of Russia as an "autocrat," a name which means that he has the political power in his own hands.

4.—Russia in Asia.

Russia in Asia may be divided into two parts—namely, Siberia and Russia East of the Caspian.

The first Russian conquests in Siberia were made in the reign of Ivan the Terrible. Yermak, a Cossack free-booter, was the leader of the first warlike expeditions against the tribes of Central and Northern Asia. He placed his conquests in the hands of the "Father Tsar," and thus won pardon for his offences.

Forts were then set up in various places, where skins were collected, and a profitable trade was thus begun. In after-years the Russian conquests were further extended, and silver, gold, and iron mines were opened out in Southern Siberia, to which political prisoners and criminals were sent.

Many stories are told of the hardships endured by exiles

But the chief wealth of Siberia is in its mines, which are mostly to be found near the mountain frontier, which separates the country from China. This part of Asia has long been famous for its gold and silver; and now that the country has become better known to the people of Europe, coal, copper, and iron mines are also being worked. There is also a great deal of rock-salt, and both tin and quicksilver have been found. We have, therefore, in this part of the Russian Empire, a district which may, in the future, be studded with busy manufacturing towns supplying Russia with many of the goods which she must now get from countries like our own.

At present the number of people, even in the fertile parts, is very small, but the country is being settled along the route of the great railway which is to join up the capital of Russia with the Pacific coast. It is known as the Trans-Siberian Railway, and when it was begun it was said that the terminus was to be Vladivostok, the Russian port on the Pacific, which is free from ice for a great part of the year.

Let us follow the line from the European frontier to this Pacific town. We begin at Chelyabinsk, on the eastern side of the Ural range. At first the line runs over steppe land, flat and monotonous, with numerous tracts of marsh land and many salt lakes. Omsk, which is known as the capital of the steppes, stands at some distance from the railway; but its spires may be seen from the windows of the passing train.

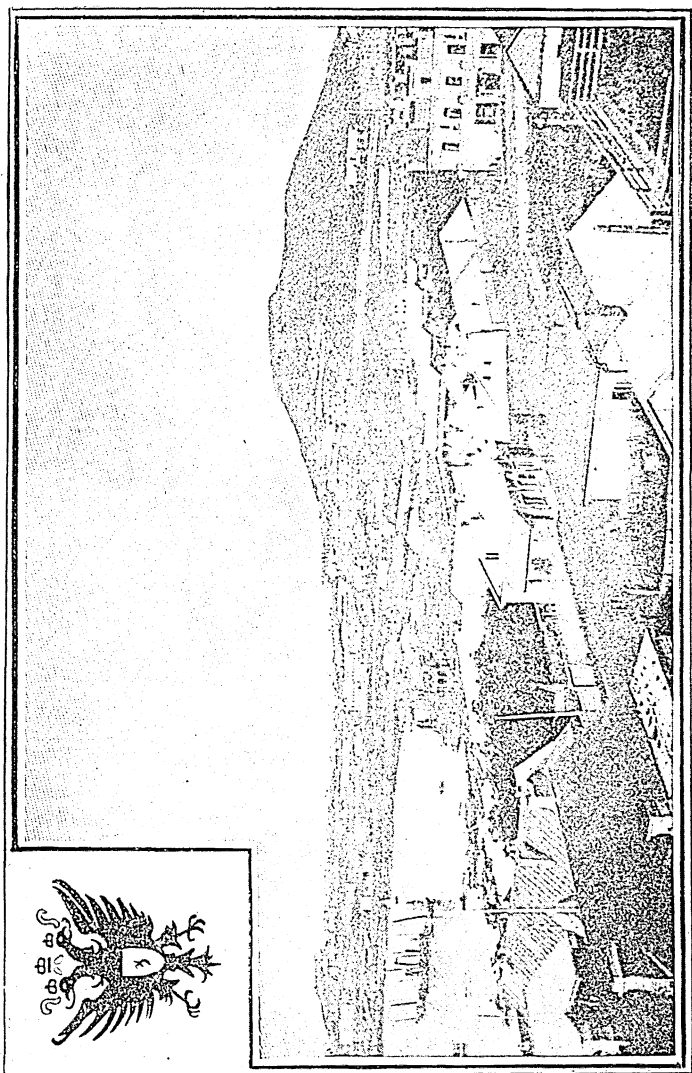
If we follow the River Irtysh, which flows near Omsk, north-west to where it joins the great river Ob or Obi, we shall come to the old town of Tobolsk, which was once the capital of Siberia. This town has a very fine

cathedral, but most of the dwelling-houses are built of wood. "The very streets are paved with planks," writes a traveller, "upon which the roll of wheels and clatter of hoofs produce at a distance a curious effect. From the citadel it sounded like the incessant beating of drums."

The central part of the great railway runs through land which is in many parts thickly covered with forest. For nearly 300 miles the line passes through unexplored woodland, full of gloom and mystery, and full, too, of wealth for future generations of Russians. Near the western end of this central portion a branch line runs north to the city of Tomsk; and at the eastern end, about 140 miles from the shore of Lake Baikal, is Irkutsk, the "White City." The latter is the chief centre of trade in mid-Siberia, and its wood-paved streets are thronged with merchants, who have brought their wares on rough carts overland—skins from the far North, tea from China, minerals from the Siberian frontier, and a variety of goods from the towns on the Pacific coast.

The passenger must cross Lake Baikal, and then board a train waiting at the station on the opposite bank. The lake is frozen over for about five months of the year, and the ice is often broken by a strong iron steam vessel, which was built in one of our Tyne shipyards. Sometimes rails are laid on the frozen surface of the lake to allow the trains to pass over. In time, however, the line is to pass round the southern part of the lake.

The railway now runs almost due east to the Pacific coast. After crossing the Amur it enters the Chinese province of Manchuria, but before reaching Vladivostok, it passes for some distance through Russian territory, as may be seen on the map.



Vladivostok has a very fine harbour surrounded by hills, and is being strongly fortified. It promises to become one of the leading cities on the Pacific coast, and is only a short distance from Japan. It is interesting to note on a map showing the eastern hemisphere how the Trans-Siberian Railway has shortened the journey from our country to Japan. The overland route takes only about half the time needed for the sea journey by way of the Suez Canal and the Straits of Malacca.

But there is an important branch of the Russian railway which we must note very carefully. This line runs through Manchuria to the shores of the Gulf of Pechili, where Russia has a naval station at Port Arthur. And Manchuria, though part of China, is "occupied" by Russia, and may really be considered as part of the Russian Empire.

Russia East of the Caspian is a wide region chiefly of steppe land, in the centre of which lies the wide Sea of Aral. This inland sea or lake is very shallow. It lies in a region which gets very little rain, and the two streams, the Amu and Syr Daria, which flow into it, do not bring a great volume of water.

By the banks of these rivers, however, there are many fertile spots, on which grain and cotton are grown. But the people who live in this wide region are mostly wandering tribes, who rear large numbers of horses and cattle. There are a few ancient cities south of the Sea of Aral, and they have now been joined up by rail with the eastern shore of the Caspian.

In the province of Bokhara the ground is artificially watered, and much fine fruit is grown. The old city of Bokhara is enclosed by a strong wall, and is one of the



A BREAD MERCHANT OF BOKHARA.

great centres of the Moslem faith, containing about three hundred mosques.. Another ancient Moslem city is Samarkand, which lies between the two great rivers of this region.

5.—The People of Russia.

The house, or *izba*, of the Russian peasant is usually built of wood, and thatched, not very neatly, with straw. As a rule the cottage

contains two rooms and a store, or large cupboard, in which the farming and gardening tools are kept.

The inside walls of the cottage are neither papered nor whitewashed. The furniture is of the roughest kind, and there is very little attempt at decoration. The chief object in the house is the large stove or oven built of brick or beaten clay, and so placed that it warms both rooms. The top of this stove is often used as a bed for the sick or old people. The beds for the others are placed near the stove; these also are very rough, merely long, wide, wooden stretchers on which the bedding is arranged.

There are no gardens attached to these cottages, nor are there any trees or shrubs about the village. The houses are crowded close together on either side of the village street, which is often barred at each end with a pole. The church and the house of the priest, with the enclosure round them, make up the brightest spot in the village. There is sometimes a school held in one of the ordinary cottages, and some villages have a cottage hospital.

The villagers are, as a rule, very ignorant, and live just as their forefathers lived many generations ago. Their food consists chiefly of rye-bread and vegetables, mostly onions or cabbages. They eat very little meat, but may have eggs or milk as a special treat. The men are dressed in coarse linen trousers and blouses fastened round the waist with a leather belt. Most of them have shoes made of bark fibre, only those who are fairly well off being able to afford boots of leather.

The women dress very neatly in white linen blouses, dark skirts, and linen aprons; they do not wear hats, but a shawl or a kerchief. Every Russian peasant girl is taught how to weave both linen and woollen cloth, and all the clothes of the family are home-made.

During the winter, which lasts for about half of the year, the ground is frozen hard to a depth of two or three feet, and covered with snow. The peasants then wear sheepskin coats, fur or woollen caps, and thick gloves. Sledges are used instead of carts to carry farm produce to the nearest railway station. And the women of the household have a very busy time spinning, weaving, smoking ham and bacon, and making the "solid soup" from which during the following summer they will be

able to make great quantities of liquid soup in a very short time.

The Russian peasant is not very fond of open-air exercise, and the older people spend a good deal of the winter time by the warm stove. But the children and young people take part in many healthy outdoor games, in which the sledge plays a prominent part.

Many of the peasants leave their village homes in the winter and go to the towns in groups, each under a leader, who acts as a kind of foreman, and finds work for his party in some factory. The workers lodge in houses provided by the owners of the factories, and the leader of each party looks after the food, and sometimes does the cooking. When winter is over the peasants go back to the country homes and their work on the farms.

Russia has a very large army, as she has an enormous land frontier to defend. Every Russian of full age may be called upon to serve in the regular army, but in those parts of the country where there are more men than are needed those who are to serve are chosen by lot. The others serve in the militia, which goes into training for a short time in each year. When a Russian farm hand or factory worker has served his time in the army he is generally much improved both in bearing and in character; he also makes a better workman, and can, as a rule, get higher wages.

On the steppes of Southern Russia live the tribes known as Kalmuks, who breed horses, cattle, camels, and sheep, and lead a wandering life in search of pasture. They are very hardy people, and have very keen sight, as well as a wonderful capacity for finding their way about on the trackless steppe. They eat horse-flesh, and drink



ON THE RUSSIAN STEPPES.

tea which has been brought from China. Their dwellings are tents made of felt, which they manufacture themselves.

Over Central Asia roam the Kirghiz, who lead a somewhat similar life. When the pasture in one place is exhausted, they send mounted men to find another suitable spot, and to clear out the wells. Then the women pack the tents on the backs of the camels, the men collect the cattle and horses, and all set out before dawn, the mother of each family riding in front. After going about twelve miles the whole caravan rests for a while, and then sets out once more on the way; and so they advance till the new pasture land is reached.

CHAPTER VIII.—EUROPEAN POWERS OF PAST AGES.

1.—The Iberian Peninsula.

THE Romans gave the name of Iberia to the westernmost peninsula of Europe, which is now occupied by the two independent kingdoms of Spain and Portugal.

In the middle part of the peninsula there is a high plateau, which is crossed by several parallel mountain ranges, between which flow the rivers, mostly to the south-west. Spain has been described as "a stern, melancholy country, with rugged mountains and long, sweeping plains, destitute of trees and very silent and lonesome."

The high mountains in the North-West cut off the central region from the moist Atlantic winds, so that the plateau is for the most part dry and parched, and suffers from extremes of heat and cold. The rivers contain little water, and are only useful for trade in their lower courses. In the South-East the climate is very hot and dry, and there is little or no water; here there are vast tracts of bare ground, with clumps of date-palms, where water appears, the scenery reminding one rather of Africa than of Europe.

But there are also fertile parts of the peninsula. In the North and North-West there are cool summers, mild winters, and plentiful rains. In the south-western and southern regions there are fertile, well-watered valleys and strips of coastal plain. And on the eastern coast there is a highly fertile strip of land stretching round the Gulf of Valencia, and known as the "Garden of Spain."

In spite of the dryness of the country as a whole most of the Spaniards get a living on the land, though in some places they have to pound the hard rock with hammers to make soil, and in nearly all parts it is necessary to irrigate the land. There are farms in the South and East which grow nothing but oranges, and those of Seville and Valencia are famous all over the world. From the grapes of the south the Spaniards make sherry wine and raisins, and export them from Cadiz and Malaga, sending large quantities to our own country.

Much fruit is also exported from Barcelona, the second city in Spain, which lies on the coast to the north-east. The dry south-eastern region grows esparto-grass, which is sent in large quantities to Great Britain to be used in making certain kinds of paper. The bark of a variety of oak-tree grown in the South furnishes cork, which figures largely in the exports of Spain.

Spain has vast stores of mineral wealth, and from the port of Bilbao, in the North, great quantities of iron ore are sent out, chiefly to British ironworks. There are other rich mines in many parts of the country, but they are not worked to any great extent. The people lack energy. There is not much money in the country, and foreigners will not invest money in mines while the government of the land is insecure. Roads and railways are few, and the country is generally in a very backward state.

Yet Spain is a land of splendid memories. She has been in her time the mistress of the world—not *one* of the Great Powers, but by far the greatest and the wealthiest. Let us look back for a few moments into her history.



MULETEERS OF SPAIN.

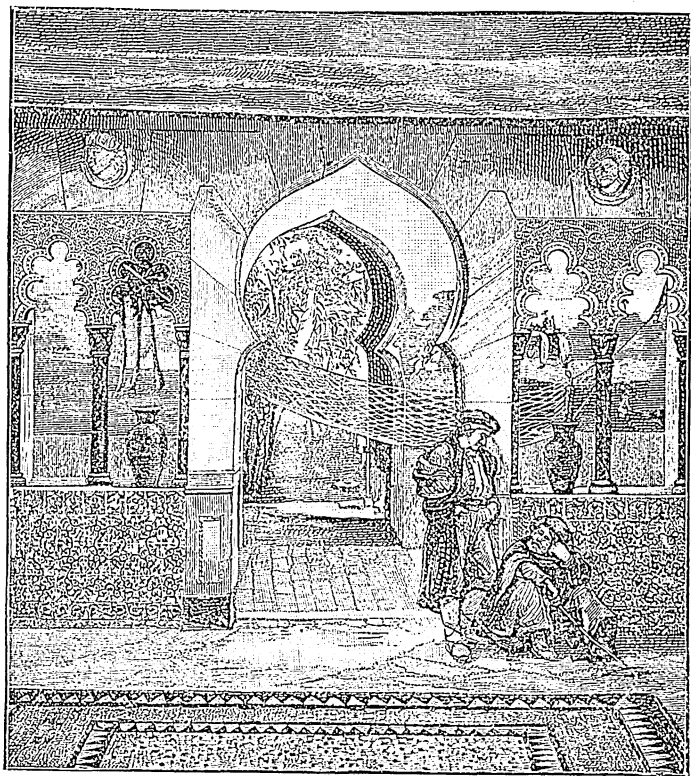
The great Emperor Charlemagne never added the South of Spain to his dominions ; for it was held by the Moors, or Saracens, from North Africa, whose capital was at Cordova, on the Guadalquivir. Many of the old towns of Southern Spain show traces in their buildings of the Moorish people, whom we must not think of as a barbarian race ; for they were both learned and cultured, and skilled in many arts and sciences.

They never conquered the Christian lands north of the Ebro, and from those mountain fastnesses came the men who in time swept them out of Spain. Near the end of the fifteenth century Ferdinand of Aragon married Isabella of Castile ; and under these two rulers the Moors were driven out of their last stronghold, the kingdom of Granada, in the South, and the whole of the peninsula was won for Christendom.

The town of Granada contains the wonderful Alhambra, the palace of the Moorish sovereigns, the beauties of which many travellers have tried in vain to describe in a fitting manner. It is a monument of the taste and skill of the Moorish architects and sculptors, and so delicate is some of its stone-carving and porcelain work that Hans Andersen speaks of it as "a petrified, fanciful lace bazaar."

In the time of Ferdinand and Isabella Columbus made his famous journey to America, sailing from the port of Palos in ships provided by the Spanish king. Spain reaped a rich benefit from the help which it gave the great sailor. For the great empire founded in America helped to make Spain the mistress of the world.

Charles V., the grandson of Ferdinand, was master, not only of Spain, but also of the Netherlands and the



MOORISH WORK IN TOLEDO.

southern part of Italy. Then he was chosen head of the Holy Roman Empire, and was thus ruler of almost the whole of Western Europe. He gave up his great dominions two years before his death, and retired to a monastery in Spain. After he died the power of Spain fell rapidly.

France took her place as the leading nation of Europe.

As time went on she lost all her colonies in the New World. Only a few years ago the last of her great colonial empire fell into the hands of the United States. And now she is reckoned among the second-rate powers of Europe. But we must never forget the high position that she once held among the world's great nations.

The capital of the country, Madrid, lies in the middle of the peninsula. It was chosen as the chief city by Charles V., though there were many other fine cities like Seville, Granada and Toledo, any one of which would have been in many ways much more suitable. The river which flows past Madrid is very small, and in summer scarcely deserves the name. The place is not healthy, and suffers much from extremes of heat and cold.

In the west of the Iberian Peninsula lies the kingdom of Portugal, which was once one of the leading seafaring nations in the world. We still have Portuguese towns in India; and we can never forget that the discoverer of the sea-route to India, Vasco da Gama, was a native of Portugal. There are large territories in Southern Africa belonging to this country. And the great republic of Brazil owes much to this European nation, and was once ruled as an independent empire by a member of the Portuguese royal house.

Portugal was at one time subject to Spain, and Philip II. had it in his power to make the ancient port of Lisbon the chief city in the peninsula. But in time Portugal won her independence, and is now a separate kingdom.

Portugal has great wealth in her fertile soil, which grows, among many other things, much fruit and great quantities of grapes. This is the land of port wine,

which is largely exported from Oporto, the second city in the kingdom. The country has also rich deposits of minerals, and does an export trade in copper.

The climate in the south of the country is very hot, but in the northern parts it is much more temperate. In 1755 Lisbon was visited by a fearful earthquake, which almost destroyed the entire city, and caused very great loss of life.

2.—The Low Countries.

When we speak of the Netherlands, or the Low Countries, at the present day, we mean Holland, or the land of the Dutch. But 300 years ago the name included almost the whole of the present Holland and Belgium, as well as a part of North-Eastern France.

The Netherlands of that time became a possession of Charles V., King of Spain and Emperor. The land contained many wealthy cities like Ghent, Brussels, and Bruges, which carried on most of the trade of Northern Europe. The beautiful buildings to be seen in many of these old cities remind us of the times when their merchants took a delight in spending part of their great wealth in making their homes places of rare beauty.

There came a time when the harsh rule of Spain could no longer be borne by the people of the Low Countries. The people who lived in the provinces round about the Zuider Zee were German and Protestant, and the feeling against Catholic Spain was strongest in those parts.

Rebellion broke out, and the Spaniards used great cruelty in their efforts to suppress it. They sent to the country a large force of Spanish veterans under the Duke of Alva, one of the best soldiers, but one of the

sternest, of history. "I have tamed people of iron in my day," he said, in scornful contempt of the traders of the North ; "shall I not easily crush these men of butter?"

"Before long," writes a historian, "the whole country became a charnel-house. The death-bell tolled hourly in every village ; not a family but was called to mourn for its dearest relatives ; while the survivors stalked listlessly about, the ghosts of their former selves among the wrecks of their former homes."

Then arose a leader who freed the people of the Netherlands from their cruel masters. This was William of Orange, a German prince. But before the work was done there was much stern fighting, many battles and sieges, and great display of valour on both sides. One of the most famous incidents of the struggle was the siege of Leyden, when the Dutch people cut the dykes along the Meuse and Yssel, and opened the sluices at Rotterdam and Schiedam and flooded the country for miles around.

"Better a drowned land than a lost land," they said ; "rather will we see our whole land and all our possessions perish in the waves than forsake thee, Leyden."

People of such spirit were bound to succeed, and before long the northern portion of the Netherlands became an independent nation under William of Orange, known as "the Silent," as president or stadtholder. The two leading States of the new country were Holland and Zealand, and in time the name of the former was applied to the new country. The southern provinces of the Netherlands, after many changes, were formed into the present country of Belgium.

Time went on, and Holland became a great seafaring nation. She set up colonies in the East and West Indies, and in South Africa, and did great trade with them, and with all parts of the world. She fought with us for the mastery of the seas, and in our William III. she gave us a king who belonged to the famous house of Orange. Under this king we fought against France side by side with Holland.

But it was Britain who finally gained command of the sea, and a great part of the Dutch Empire overseas passed into our hands. Yet Holland has still large possessions in the East Indies with which she does great trade in sugar and spices, coffee and cocoa.

The soil of Holland has mostly been won from the water by persistent energy. The surface of the country is low and flat, and if the shores were not guarded by means of dykes, about two-fifths of the whole land would lie beneath the level of the sea. Holland is a land of water-courses, for not only is it cut up by the numerous rivers, which may be seen in the map, but there are also many canals joining up these streams and helping the trade of the country by providing cheap means of transit.

Many of the coast districts were once beneath the sea, but have been reclaimed by drainage, and made into very good farm lands. Inland marshes and fen lands have also been drained, and river courses regulated, just as in our own Fen District. It is worth noting that a great part of the draining of our fens was done under the direction of a Dutch engineer.

The cultivation of the soil gives work to about one-third of the Dutch people, and they grow grain and bulbous roots. Many of the latter are exported to Great

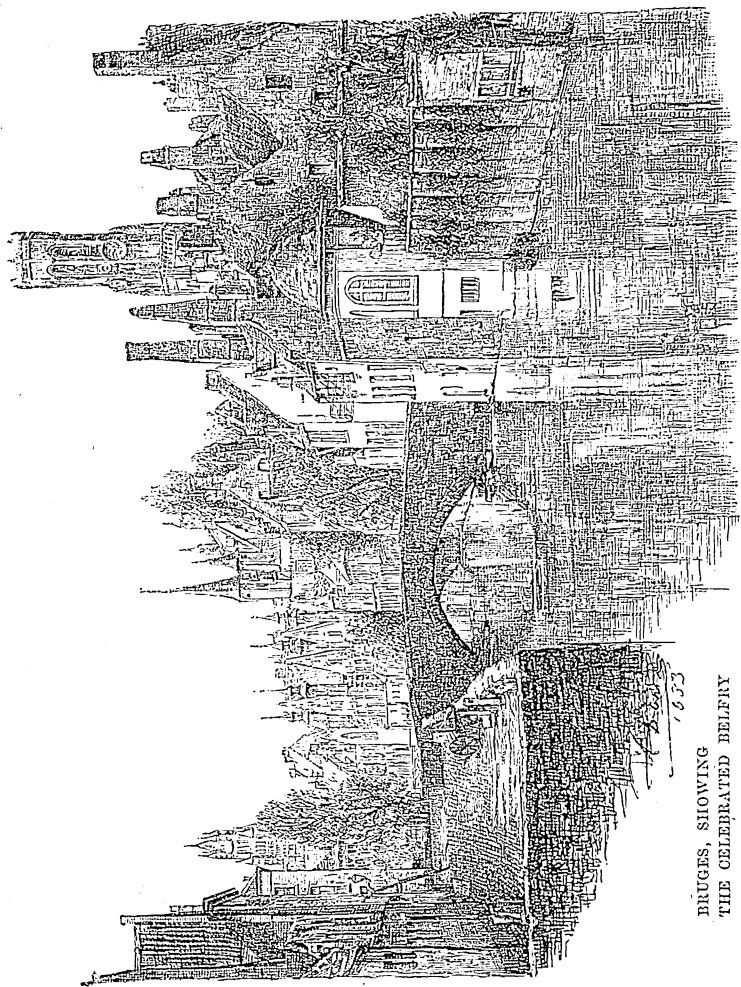
Britain, and make our gardens gay in spring with the snowdrop, crocus, tulip, narcissus, and daffodil.

On the pastures large numbers of cattle are fed, and cheese, butter, and eggs are largely sent across the North Sea to our own land. A good many people are engaged in trade, and one of the chief branches of commerce is the importing of colonial goods from the East Indies, and then exporting them to other countries. So we find that such things as coffee, sugar, and spices figure among the exports of Holland.

Amsterdam and Rotterdam are the leading towns and ports of this busy little country. They are for the most part trading ports of the usual kind, and we must travel inland to see how Dutch life and ways differ from our own.

These people are the cleanest and tidiest of all the nations on the Continent. Their dwelling-houses and farms are models of neatness and order, and Dutch housewives are persistent enemies of all that is dirty. Before entering the house each person puts off his or her shoes and leaves them at the door, so that the clean floors may not be soiled. "No need to ask," writes a traveller, "if 'madam is at home to her friends.' The presence or absence of her wooden shoes at the door tells always whether she is in or out."

The Dutch are a hard-working people, and, as we have seen, make the very most out of the scanty gifts of Nature. They also know how to enjoy themselves, especially in winter, when the canals are frozen over, and all but the old and infirm and the very young get out their long skates, and skim easily over the smooth ice. Women skate to market, boys and girls skate to school, and men to their work.



BRUGES, SHOWING
THE CELEBRATED BELFAY

Holland is a land of farmers and traders and fishermen. But the southern part of the old Low Countries, now known as the kingdom of Belgium, is for the most part quite different. Here there are many coal and iron mines, and the south-eastern part of the land forms a vast workshop, with busy towns set closely together turning out all kinds of factory-made goods.

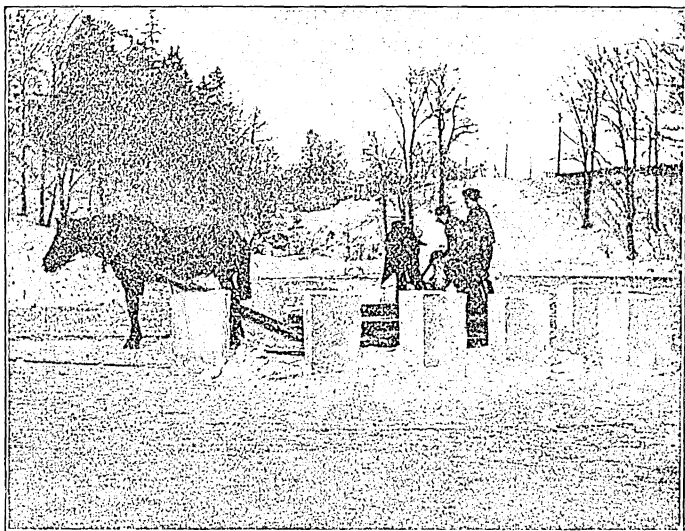
Belgium has been called "the cockpit of Europe," because so many great battles have taken place within its borders. Not many miles from Brussels, the capital, is the battlefield of Waterloo, on which was fought, in 1815, the great fight between Napoleon Bonaparte and the Duke of Wellington, aided by the Prussian General Blücher.

The King of the Belgians is also head of the Congo Free State in Western Africa. This is a very large territory, which exports a great deal of palm-oil, rubber, and ivory.

3.—The Scandinavian Peninsula and Denmark.

The peninsula of Scandinavia forms the dual kingdom of Sweden and Norway. The two countries have the same king, but each is quite separate from the other so far as its home affairs are concerned. The monarchy is not now very powerful among the States of Europe, but there was a time when Sweden held a very high place indeed.

This was about 300 years ago, when a Swedish king named Gustavus Adolphus was on the throne. He was known as "the Lion of the North," and he was one of the greatest generals who ever commanded an army. He won lands from the kings of Norway and Denmark,



ICE-CUTTING IN NORWAY.

and he ruled the Baltic shores of Russia, as well as Finland.

But after his death on the battlefield his kingdom fell from its proud place. Little by little it shrank, till it occupied only the Baltic lands of the Scandinavian Peninsula, as it does to-day. And in the beginning of the nineteenth century it was joined into one kingdom with Norway.

Norway is a land of lofty mountains, with a deeply-indented coast, ice-free, except in the far north, all the year through. Sweden is, on the whole, very flat, with many wide lakes and slow, winding rivers and a low coast-line, which is ice-bound for several months of the year.

The people of Norway are mostly fishermen, seamen, and foresters. The mountain-sides are covered with forests of pine and fir, and the chief exports from the country are timber and wood-pulp. Only a small part of the land can be farmed, and a great deal of corn must be imported.

An interesting Norwegian industry is the export of ice, though it is not so important as it used to be before machines were invented by which ice can be made. The thick ice on the lakes or rivers is cut out with long saws in large square blocks, and drawn away on sledges, as shown in the picture. Much of it is exported to England for use in hotels and fish-shops during the summer.

In Sweden the chief work of the people is on the land. There are large farms which raise great quantities of oats and rye, and dairy farms turn out excellent butter and cheese. Sweden also has rich deposits of iron, some of which lie within the Arctic Circle, and the making of steel is one of the chief industries of the country. Swedish steel is known for its excellence all over the world.

The chief city of Norway is Christiania, on a fiord of the same name. It has a beautiful situation among wood-clad hills, and it is the chief railway-centre; but the railways do not run beyond the coast town of Trondhjem, which lies on a fiord famous for the beauty of its scenery. The second town in the country is Bergen, which was one of the trading cities of the Hansa League, of which we read in our chapter about Germany.

Stockholm, the capital of Sweden, is a beautiful old town, which has been called the "Venice of the North,"

because it is built on several islands between Lake Mälär and the Baltic. It has a fine harbour and a large trade, but the greater part of the export trade of the country passes through Göteborg and Malmö in the south-west.

The people of Scandinavia all spring from the same stock, but there are differences between Swedes and Norwegians. The former have had more to do with Baltic people, the latter with Danes and Englishmen. Our early history reminds us frequently of the close connection between Norway and Britain.

The people of both countries are very energetic and fond of open-air work and sports. They believe much in education, and aim at doing all their work in the best possible manner, taking advantage of all that science has to teach them, and putting their knowledge to practical use in their industries.

They have many interesting winter games ; one of the most exciting and skilful is *ski-ing*. The *ski* consists of a long, narrow piece of wood turned upwards at the toe, and fitted with straps in the middle for fastening it to the foot. It is so fastened that the heel is left free to move.

With one of these skates on each foot and a staff in his hand the young Scandinavian can move over the open country at the rate of six to eight miles an hour. Ski races and leaping trials are common, the latter taking place down a long, snow-covered slope. This is how a traveller describes an athlete going through the *hoprend*, as it is called, before the eyes of a large crowd of spectators. "A bugle sounds one note, and now from snowy heights above glides a figure at ever-increasing speed, motionless in that the slightly-bent body is rigid.

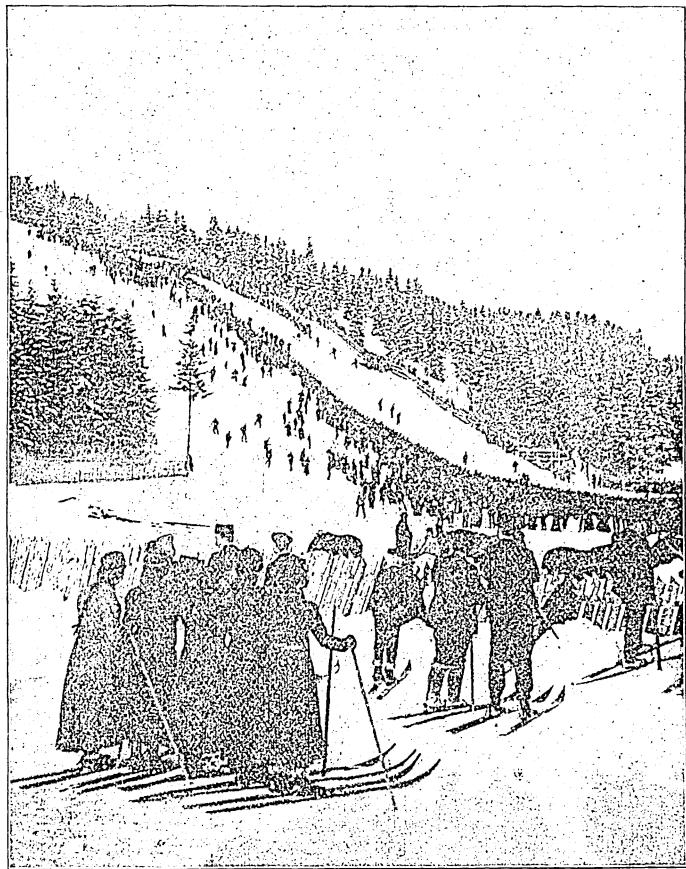
In a flash he is past us. . . . The eye scarcely follows the young athlete as he gains the platform overlooking the valley, when this human bird assumes the upright, as with one terrific shout he flies into space, balancing with his extended arms so as to keep an upright position, at the same time depressing the ski to meet the sharp descent far below.

"The leap is so chosen that the leaper cannot alight on the flat, or the shock would kill him. After a flight of some two or three seconds he alights on the hinder parts of his ski with a sharp thud on the snowy slope; and if a good enough man to keep upright, he is carried with great speed down the lower slope and far away on to the flat below. At length, having done this 'all standing,' he turns at the edge of the crowd gracefully, yet with scarcely less speed, and faces the great drop which he has taken."*

The little country of Denmark has taken a large part in the history of Europe, and has had a great deal to do with our own national story, as a little thought will readily remind us. The Danes of past times were fearless seamen, and made colonies in Greenland, Iceland, and the West Indies. The Faroe Islands to the north of Scotland also belong to Denmark.

Denmark is now one of the "little peoples" of Europe so far as political power is concerned. But for industry and energy the Danes stand second to none. They have some of the best-kept farms in the world, and they export large quantities of dairy produce. Like the Swedes and our own people in Canada, they are very careful to study

* "Thirty Seasons in Scandinavia," by E. B. Kennedy (Edward Arnold).



THE HOPREND—SHOWING THE SLOPE.

and practise the most improved methods of making butter and cheese, and have numbers of schools where butter-making is taught.

Copenhagen is the capital of Denmark, and the chief port. It lies on the east coast of the island of Zealand.

4.—Greeks and Turks.

The Balkan Peninsula, in the south-east of Europe, gets its name from the Balkan Mountains, which run to the eastward south of the Lower Danube. These mountains are an offshoot from the main chain, which is a continuation of the Carpathians, and runs to the southernmost part of Greece. The peninsula is, then, very mountainous, and it contains a large number of swift rivers, which flow mostly to the *Ægean* Sea.

The land of Greece forms the southernmost part of the peninsula. It has now no political importance, but in the days before the birth of Christ, and before Rome rose to greatness, Greece was the leading power in the world. And her history is glorious, not only because of the power of her armies and fleet, and the wisdom of her statesmen, but because of her poets and historians, her philosophers, artists, and sculptors. The civilized nations of Western Europe owe more to Ancient Greece than can easily be set down.

Rome conquered Greece by the might of her armies, and took her place as a world power. But Greek learning, art and culture has conquered the whole world. Poets and prose-writers of all European countries have taken the works of the Ancient Greeks as their models. Sculptors have tried in vain to equal the beauty of the statues and carving of old Greece. Western statesmen, lawyers, and men of science have won wisdom and knowledge from the men who lived in the Greek cities of the olden days, among which Athens, still the capital of Greece, was the leader.

At a later day Constantinople, now the Turkish capital, was the centre of Greek life. The name means "the

city of Constantine," for the city was founded by a Roman Emperor of this name as his new capital. This caused a division of the Roman Empire into two portions, and before long there was one emperor at Rome and another at Constantinople. Charlemagne and his successors claimed to rule the western part under the name of the Holy Roman Empire; as we have already seen. And the city of Constantinople came to be the centre of what was called the Eastern or Greek Empire.

This went on for about a thousand years until the city of Constantinople was taken by the Turks, who came from Asia. Large numbers of Christian Greeks were slaughtered by the invaders. The beautiful cathedral church of Saint Sophia became a mosque, which it has been ever since. Thus the Turks gained the footing in Europe which they had tried to gain since the time of the Crusades.

They overran the whole of South-Eastern Europe, and their armies advanced into Hungary and Poland. They were, however, driven back beyond the Danube, and for a long time the people of the Balkan Peninsula remained sunk in ignorance and barbarism under the heavy rule of the Sultans at Constantinople.

Then the Greeks rose against the Turks, and after a long and bitter struggle a Greek kingdom was set up in the south of the peninsula. And as a result of later wars several independent States were set up in the north of the peninsula.

Roumania and Servia became kingdoms; Montenegro and Bulgaria became principalities; while Bosnia and Herzegovina passed under the rule of Austria. Thus the dominions of the Sultan were much reduced. He is an

Asiatic monarch with Asiatic ideas, and rules by means of his army. And there are almost constant rebellions in his country, which are usually put down with great severity.

Naturally, when we think of its history and present political state, we do not expect to find the Balkan Peninsula taking a foremost place among the busy trading nations of the world. Greece does a good deal of coasting trade and exports large quantities of fruit, especially currants. Turkey trades in carpets, shawls, and leather, but these things come chiefly from the Sultan's dominions in Asia, where he rules the greater part of the south-west of the continent.

Bulgaria exports attar of roses, made from the extensive rose-gardens in the valley of the Upper Maritza. Servia is in a very backward state, and her chief industry is the rearing of cattle and horses. Roumania has a fertile soil, and produces great quantities of wheat, some of which is exported to England and Germany. Montenegro is a pastoral State, without any other industry at all.

These lands, however, have all great natural wealth, and under settled government would no doubt become useful and progressive States. The Turk is the enemy to all progress, and the reader of history may wonder why the Powers of Europe have not joined to clear him out of European territory. But we must remember that the great question would then be, "Who is to occupy his place?" And the finding of an answer to it might mean much war and bloodshed among the Great Powers themselves.

The settlement and good government of the Balkan

Peninsula is the great problem which many famous statesmen have tried in vain to solve. It is known as the "Eastern Question," and the answer is as yet a mystery.

5.—The Playground of the Nations.

We have already seen how the Hapsburg family came from a district in the north of what is now known as Switzerland. To the east of the Hawk Castle lay three mountain districts, or cantons, round about the Lake of Lucerne. They were known as the Waldstatten, or Forest Cantons, and they were leagued together for purposes of defence. The whole of what is now Switzerland belonged to the Holy Roman Empire, but the emperors were very powerless, and the various parts of their dominions had to a great extent to take care of themselves.

The Forest Cantons were Schwyz, Uri, and Unterwalden, and they were peopled by a hardy race of mountaineers of German descent. The dangers of their daily life among the mountains had made them strong in body and quick in mind, lovers of freedom and impatient of restraint. The men of Schwyz seem to have taken the lead among the three cantons, and when a new country was formed among the Alpine lands, quite separate from the Empire, it became known by their name—Switzerland.

Now, the Hapsburg family wished to add the Forest Cantons to their private estates, and they set about trying to do so. They claimed certain duties or taxes from the men of the mountains, and sent officers to collect them who behaved in a very insolent manner. This roused the spirit of the mountaineers, and they resolved to free their land from the oppressor.

To this time belongs the legend of William Tell, who, it is said, was forced by an Austrian overseer to show his skill in archery by shooting at an apple on the head of his own child, a boy of twelve, and who afterwards slew the tyrant as he was making his way to his home. The story is, unfortunately, not true, but it serves to show the spirit which fired the men of the Forest Cantons at that time, and we cannot wonder that in the end they were able to free themselves from Austria.

There was a good deal of fighting before this was done. One battle took place in the narrow pass of Morgarten, to the north-east of the Lake of Lucerne. Here the Austrian army was caught in a trap, and though they fought bravely, their valour was of no avail against the mountaineers, who were fighting in their own country, and were familiar with every foot of the ground. This great victory caused the men of other districts to join the Forest Cantons in their fight for freedom.

At Sempach, to the north-west of the Lake of Lucerne, another fight took place many years later, and once again the Austrian troops were beaten. The Confederates, as the mountaineers were called, were greatly outnumbered, and it seemed at one moment as if they were going to be swept from the field. But they were saved by the valour of one man, Arnold von Winkelried. He ran forward against the Austrian rank of spears, and, grasping in his arms a number of the pointed weapons, made a breach in the line through which his countrymen fought their way to victory.

These were only two of the many fights in a long struggle which ended in all the people of the Western Alps forming a new country, independent both of the

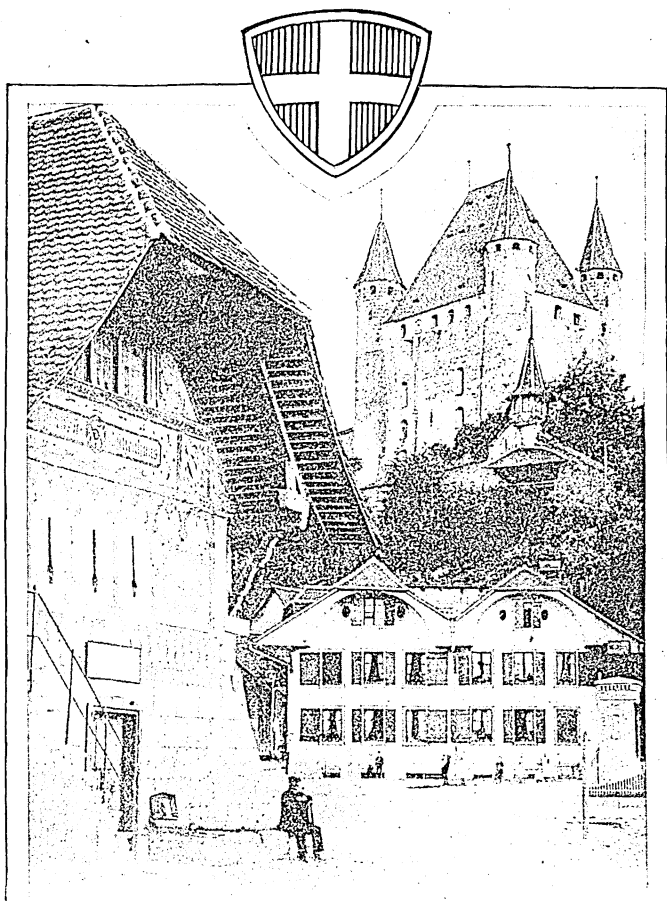


Photo by J. Howard Harris.

IN A SWISS VILLAGE.

Hapsburgs and of the Empire. Such was the beginning of the present republic of Switzerland. It is not a country peopled by a single race using one speech. In

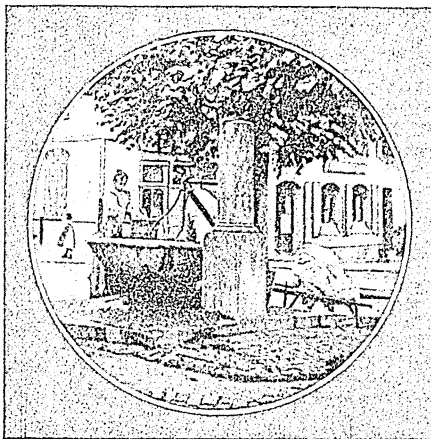


Photo by J. Howard Harris.

STREET WASHING IN A SWISS VILLAGE.

the north-east and centre live people who use the German tongue; in the west and south-west French is spoken; in the south there are many Italians. But in spite of this the Alpine peoples do indeed form a united nation as far as the outside world is concerned.

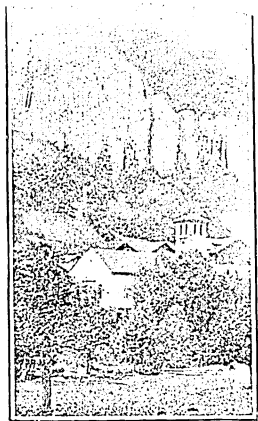
We have given to this mountain land the name of "the Playground of the Nations" because so many people from all parts of the world visit it in search of pleasure and recreation.

What do they come to see? Its lofty mountains with their snow-clad peaks; its deep ravines and mighty gorges; its rocky mountain roads or passes; its great glaciers and foaming mountain torrents; its lakes, large and small, grand and beautiful; its pleasant, vine-clad valleys; and the picturesque life of the mountain people. Some climb the mountains, and if they are wise they take with them guides who know the way. But each year numbers of people lose their lives in making attempts to scale the heights without a guide.

Switzerland is, however, not merely a country of hotels and inns, landlords and waiters. The lower mountain valleys are used as pasture land. The vine is grown in

the Upper Rhone Valley and other parts. The country is famous for its watches and toys, many of the latter being made by the people of the mountain villages during the winter months ; and Swiss lace and embroidery are known and valued by ladies all over the world.

There are a number of towns, which are mostly thronged in summer and comparatively quiet in the winter. Berne, on the Aare, is the capital, though Zurich is the largest town in the country. Other towns of note are Basle and Constance, in the North, and Lucerne, Neuchâtel, and Geneva, on the lakes of the same names. Each of these towns is joined by rail with Germany or France ; the line through Basle and Lucerne is that which connects Germany with the Plain of Lombardy by way of the St. Gothard tunnel, the longest in the world.



A SWISS SCENE.

CHAPTER IX.—THE UNITED STATES.

1.—A General Survey.

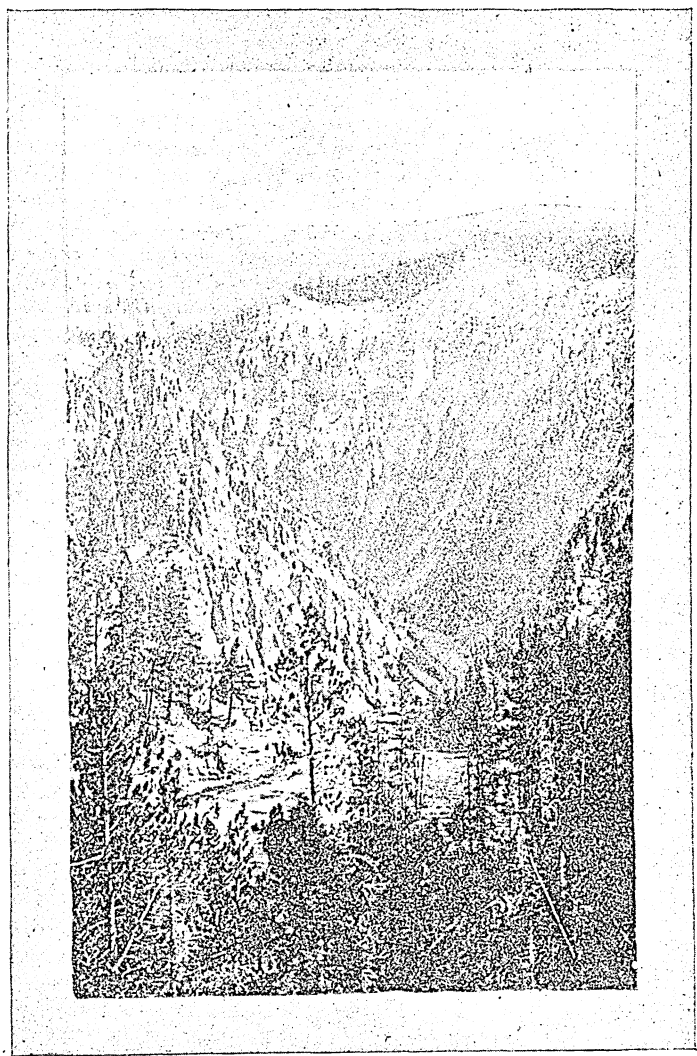
THE United States of America, one of the leading Great Powers of the world, lies between Canada and the republic of Mexico, and has a seaboard on the Atlantic, on the Gulf of Mexico, and on the Pacific. To this great country also belongs Alaska, in the North-West of the continent, and the whole American territory covers an area rather more than that of Europe.

The land is divided into fifty parts, most of them called States, while the others are known as territories. The most populous and busiest of these divisions are those on the Atlantic seaboard and in the basin of the Ohio, which flows into the Mississippi.

The United States is a land of lofty mountains, mighty rivers, wide plains—known in the central part as prairies—and great lakes. Its physical features are on a scale which make those of our land look very tame indeed.

In the far West of the country there are ranges which run parallel with the coast. Many of these mountains are made up for the most part of lava, and there are several volcanoes. In one of these ranges is the famous Yosemite Valley. Its sides are formed by steep and lofty precipices, in some parts nearly 3,000 feet high. Such a valley is known as a cañon. Over the sides leap numerous waterfalls. The lower slopes of the valley are clothed with pine-woods, and the whole scene is one of wonderful grandeur.

Further east is the Rocky Mountain system, which forms the middle part of a great range stretching through



THE GRAND CAÑON OF THE YELLOWSTONE RIVER.

the entire length of the two Americas. In the United States these high lands form several parallel ranges, pierced here and there by deep cañons.

In the northern portion of the Rockies a district has been marked off as a National Park. It consists of an elevated and extensive basin set round with many high peaks. Here there are numerous geysers throwing streams of hot water to a great height, and many hot-springs. The scenery is magnificent. The plateau is richly wooded with pines, and there are paths through the woods leading from one group of geysers to another. The district is drained by the Yellowstone River, which flows north to join the Missouri. It has been called the "Wonderland of the Rocky Mountains."

Eastward of the Rocky Mountains lies the great basin of the Mississippi. It is of varying height, but consists for the most part of wide stretches of treeless prairie land, on which in past years the Indian hunted the buffalo and the wild horse.

Parts of this great central plain are covered with forests. There are also wide pastoral plains and rich farm lands. The Mississippi and its many great feeders provide a means of transit for goods of a bulky nature, such as wheat, coal, and lumber.

The waters of the Missouri and Mississippi often overflow their banks, and in many places higher artificial banks have been raised to prevent destruction; these are called levees. In other places jetties or breakwaters are built to break the force of the current, and prevent injury to the banks of the river. The trees growing by the sides of the stream often fall into the water, owing to the undermining of the banks, and these, carried

bodily down the broad stream, are a great source of danger to navigation.

East of the great central river plain there are several mountain ridges, which run from the Gulf of Mexico in a north-easterly direction through the eastern states of the country.

One of these eastern ranges is known as the Alleghany Mountains, which are composed of limestone; and in some places the internal action of water has formed large caves such as we can see in our own Peak District in Derbyshire, but, as a rule, much more extensive. One of the best known of these underground chambers is the Mammoth Cave of Kentucky. It stretches for many miles underground, and contains numerous avenues, waterfalls, streams, and deep, dark caverns.

In the waters of this cavern are found small fish with skins which are quite colourless, owing to the absence of light in their underground home. They are, moreover, quite blind, for the eyes are hidden beneath the skin, the organs having been entirely lost through disuse.

To the north of the Alleghany range stretch the highlands of New England. This is one of the most beautiful parts of the country. Here are romantic glens and rocky gorges and ravines, rushing torrents and waterfalls, both beautiful and grand. From Mount Washington, the highest point, a fine view may be obtained. "You stand," writes a traveller, "in the centre of a circle of country 250 miles across—high above all. An ocean of earth-billows, misty and sombre, reels away to the far horizon on every side—an ocean which has, as it were, 'by stroke of the enchanter's wand,' become suddenly and for ever congealed."

In the easternmost part of the country is the Atlantic coast plain, which stretches from the peninsula of Florida to the mouth of the Hudson River, and is widest in the States of Georgia and South Carolina. Along the sea-coast are numerous sand-bars enclosing a large number of channels or sounds.

The Atlantic coastal plain is crossed by many useful rivers, the most important being the Hudson, by which the first European settlers made their way inland from the coast. The river is named from an Englishman, Henry Hudson, who led a party of Dutchmen up the river, and found the lands in the valley very fair and fertile. Here many of them settled, and the Hudson Valley afterwards became the centre of life and trade activity in the Eastern States. The great city of New York lies at the lower outlet of the river valley.

To the north of these States lie the five great fresh-water lakes which help to separate the United States from Canada. They are really inland seas, and are often visited by storms quite as furious as those of the ocean. The largest of all, Superior, has an area greater than that of Scotland.

Across these lakes there is a great deal of trade between Canadian and American ports, the largest of which is Chicago, one of the busiest cities in the world. The lakes are joined together to form a kind of chain; and in the river which connects Erie and Ontario occur the famous Niagara Falls, whose beauty and awe-inspiring grandeur are the wonder of the world.

There are great differences between the climate of the various parts of such an extensive country as the United States. The southern States are not far from

the tropics, while those in the North are nearly fifty degrees from the equator. The climate of the inland parts is more extreme than that of the States under the influence of the sea. But the eastern States are often swept in winter by great westerly storms from the mid-land plain, which are known as blizzards.

The territory of Alaska at one time belonged to Russia, and was sold by that country to the United States in 1867. At that time the country was not thought to be of much use. It was regarded by most people as a land of ice and snow, useless for settlement, and of value only for its salmon and seal fisheries.

But in recent years gold has been found in the eastern part of the country, and has drawn a large number of people from all parts of the United States. And they have found that there is more in Alaska than its gold. The climate, though severe enough, is not nearly so forbidding as it was thought to be. There are boundless stretches of forest land, and the lumber trade promises to become very great. Oil-wells have been found, and it is expected that in time the exports of petroleum will be very large. The soil is in many parts suitable for the growth of grain; and it is thought that the cod fisheries of the Bering Straits will some day be as valuable as those of Newfoundland.

Towns have sprung up quickly at various parts, with schools, churches, and paved streets lit by electricity. Railways are being built, which will before long traverse the peninsula from end to end. In 1903 the eastern boundary of the country, which had long been disputed with Canada, was settled by arbitration. And, on the whole, Alaska promises to become one of the busiest parts of the United States territory.

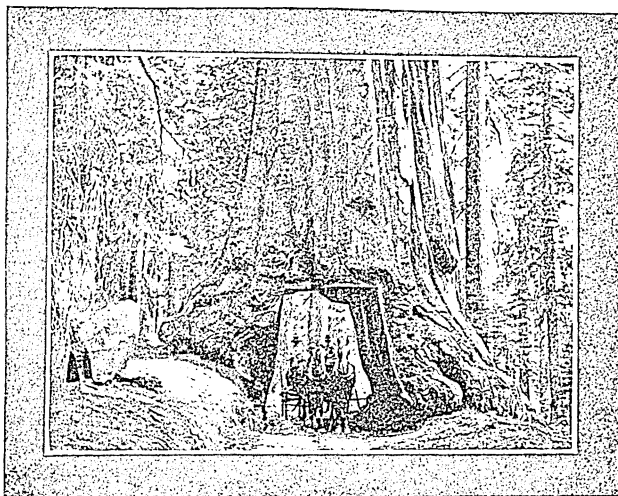
2.—Some American Industries.

It is very difficult to give in a single chapter any idea of the great activity of the American people in farming, mining, and manufacturing. In thinking of this great and busy country we are reminded of the Eastern pasha who put his general ideas of our own busy land into the following words: "The armies of the English ride upon the vapours of boiling caldrons, and their horses are flaming coals! Whirr! whirr! all by wheels! Whiz! whiz! all by steam!"

Let us consider first what is made of the soil. About one-third of the people are employed on farms and plantations, and the things grown are not only enormous in quantity, but of a very varied character.

As we know, cotton requires both heat and moisture, so we find the cotton plantations in the South-Eastern States of the Union. The finest quality is known as sea-island cotton, and is grown on the islands off the coast of Georgia and South Carolina. A great quantity of the American cotton finds its way to our Lancashire towns; but each year more and more is needed for the mills of the United States, and our merchants are beginning to look for supplies to various parts of the British Empire.

The United States sends out an enormous quantity of wheat and flour, mostly to Britain. The soil of the more northerly prairies is very well fitted for the growth of wheat, and here there are farms with corn-fields, beside which those in England or Scotland would look very small indeed. Another large crop on these farms is that of oats, most of which are exported across the Atlantic,



THE TUNNEL TREE OF CALIFORNIA.

both in the form of meal, and crushed whole for making porridge. "Corn" in the States means usually maize or Indian corn, which is very largely grown and used for making a great number of foods.

The tobacco crop of the United States is greater than that of any other country in the world. The plantations are mostly to be found in the Eastern States, and one of these, Virginia, has given its name to a kind of tobacco. About half of the tobacco grown comes from Kentucky State, in the basin of the Ohio.

The mountain and hilly districts in the States are well clothed with timber, which forms one of the chief sources of wealth in the country. The number of people engaged in lumbering is not far short of half a million. The lumber-men of the more northern States enter the

forests in the fall of the year, and set up an encampment for the winter. Through the cold season the trees are felled, and are sawn into logs. When the streams thaw in the following spring these logs are floated down to saw-mills, where they are cut up into planks and beams.

The stock-farms of the States rear huge numbers of live-stock. Horses are raised on the grassy prairie lands, and mules in the warmer lands of the South. Neither of these animals is a native of America. The old inhabitant of the prairie land was the bison, or buffalo. A few are still to be found, but the wild bison will probably before long become extinct.

In many States large numbers of hogs are reared, especially in those which produce "corn," upon which these animals are fattened for slaughter. Bacon, ham, and lard occupy a high place in the list of things sent out from American ports.

Large herds of cattle are fed on the prairies, and wherever there is good grass land in the Eastern States. Most of these are killed for their flesh and hides, as well as for making beef-extract. The chief dairy farms are in the North-Eastern States, as near as possible to the large towns, which take their supplies of milk, butter, and cheese.

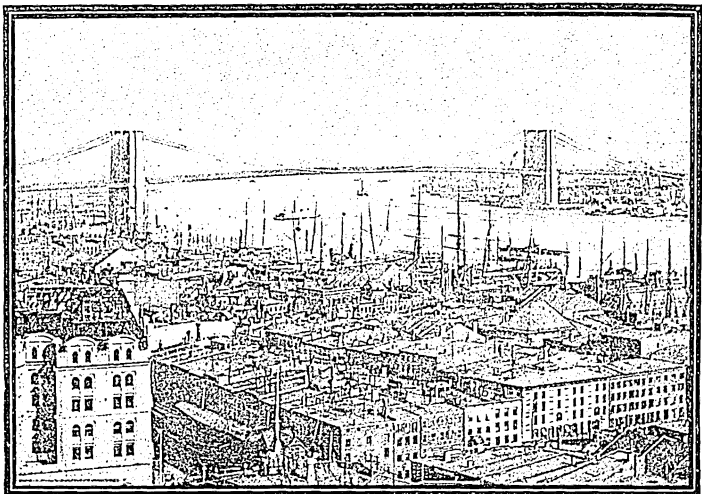
The United States is now the chief iron-producing country in the world, and comes next to our own land for the amount of coal raised from the mines. Most of these two useful minerals are found in the Eastern States. Three-fourths of the coal mined is soft, or bituminous. The rest is hard coal, like that of South Wales, and is nearly all mined in the State of Pennsylvania, where is Pittsburg, the "Birmingham of the States."

A great deal of the petroleum sold in our shops comes from the oil-wells of the States. When heated the oil gives off vapour, from which are made kerosene, naphtha, and benzine. After all the vapour has passed off the residue is made into vaseline. A wonderful product of certain oil States is natural gas, which comes from porous rocks like limestone or sandstone. It is chiefly used as fuel in iron-works, and sometimes for lighting dwelling-houses.

Gold to the yearly value of over ten millions is got, chiefly from the Western States. Silver valued at a higher figure is also mined west of the Rockies. Copper is another resource of this country, whose natural mineral wealth is astounding.

It is quite impossible to give any idea of the number of things turned out of American foundries and factories. Having plenty of coal and raw material (except, perhaps, wool), the country makes most of the things required to make present-day life comfortable, and these are much too numerous even to mention.

The United States is the land of inventors, and some of the most useful labour-saving machines hail from this country. In 1794 Eli Whitney made the first cotton-gin, a machine for taking the seeds out of raw cotton. The first really successful sewing-machine was made by Elias Howe in 1845. It is said that the telegraph and the first useful steamship came to us from over the Atlantic, though there are many who dispute these claims. The use of electricity in many ways owes more, perhaps, to the great American electrician Edison than to anyone else. And American inventors have always been foremost in improving machines used in factories and on farms.



BROOKLYN BRIDGE, OPENED IN 1883.

3.—Some American Towns.

The United States is a land of great cities. New York is by far the largest, and for population ranks second in the whole world. Next to New York come Chicago and Philadelphia, the first nearly three times, and the second twice as large as our great port of Liverpool. Then there are about sixteen towns with more than two hundred thousand people—that is, larger than our northern metropolis, Newcastle-on-Tyne.

New York is the capital and chief port of the country, and is built partly on Manhattan Island, which lies at the mouth of the Hudson River. It is connected with Brooklyn on Long Island by a splendid suspension bridge more than a mile long.

The chief street of New York is called Broadway, and it is more than three miles in length. It is planted with fine trees, and the buildings on either side are very lofty. These high buildings, some of them of from twelve to twenty stories, are one of the features of the city, and are sometimes spoken of as "sky-scrappers."

In the broad harbour of the city float ships of all nations; and there is just as much variety about the people who do business in this great world's market. They have come from all parts of Europe, as their names will prove to anyone who cares to study them on the shop-fronts and offices. The servants in the huge hotels are mostly negroes, and excellent servants they make.

On Manhattan Island is the famous Central Park, which was once a tract of stagnant marsh dotted with huge boulders, and is now laid out with countless broad drives and lovely tree-shaded walks, numerous bridges, and arches. Here, as in our own Hyde Park, the wealthy people of the city take their drives and rides; or in the winter time, when the snow is deep enough, turn out in beautiful sledges drawn by fine horses.

Chicago, the second city of the United States, stands at one end of Lake Michigan. It is a city of rapid growth. Eighty years ago it did not exist. Now it is the greatest of the lake ports, and distributes the produce of the northern prairie lands and forests. It sends out much meat, corn, and lumber, and has also an enormous transport trade, owing to its situation.

Chicago is not a beautiful city. It is laid out in straight lines, as though it had been planned with a ruler. It has huge cattle-markets and slaughter-houses, and these are not things of beauty. But some attempt

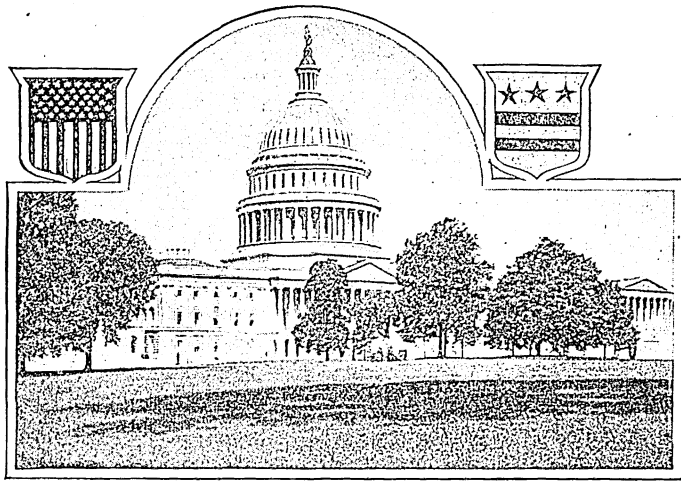
is being made to improve the appearance of the city, and a University and museum have been set up in recent years.

Philadelphia reminds us of the Quaker William Penn, who founded Pennsylvania. It stands at the mouth of the Delaware River, and ranks next to New York as an Atlantic port. In this city is the famous hall from the steps of which the declaration was read which proclaimed the independence of the United States (see page 201).

Boston, in Massachusetts, is one of the leading commercial cities of the United States, as well as a literary centre known as the Athens of America. It is not planned, like most American cities, with geometrical regularity, but has many winding and crooked streets like those of the cities of the Old World. Its suburb, Cambridge, contains the famous Harvard University.

"Pittsburg," writes an English visitor to the great city, "would be more enjoyable as a home if the inhabitants were favoured with occasional glimpses of the sky; but it is at present to be more admired for its industry than for its atmospheric surroundings." This is the chief city of the American "Black Country," from which come an enormous quantity of steel rails, coke, oil, glass, and other articles of a useful rather than an ornamental nature.

We turn for a change of surroundings to Washington, the Government capital of the States, which lives for the most part on politics. Here is the splendid marble building known as the Capitol, with its lofty dome, at the top of which is a bronze statue of Liberty, "which reflects the beams of the sun so as to appear from a distance like a dazzling spot of fire." This is the Parlia-



THE CAPITOL AT WASHINGTON.

ment House of the States. Here also is the White House, the residence of the President, by no means a grand building, but homely and quiet, like many of the men who have occupied it, and have won great names in history.

New Orleans, near the mouth of the Mississippi, is a town of another type. Many of its people are descended from French ancestors; for many of the first French settlers sought a pathway into the heart of the country by means of the Mississippi, and set up this town near the mouth of the great river. New Orleans has been described as a "city of villas and cottages, and of leafy gardens, intersected by many miles of unpaved

NOTE.—The coat of arms on the right hand is that of the Washington family, and was the origin of the "stars and stripes."

streets shaded by forest trees, haunted by song-birds fragrant with a wealth of flowers that never fails a day in the year, and abundant in season with fruit—the fig, the plum, the pomegranate, the orange. No other large city in America is so laid open to the sunshine and the air.”

In the West, on the Pacific Coast, stands the great city of San Francisco. It has a splendid harbour and a fine situation, but it is not a healthy place. In one part of the city live a large number of Chinese, who do all kinds of work for very small pay. They manage, however, to put by money, for they can live on very little, and in due time they go back across the Pacific to their native country.

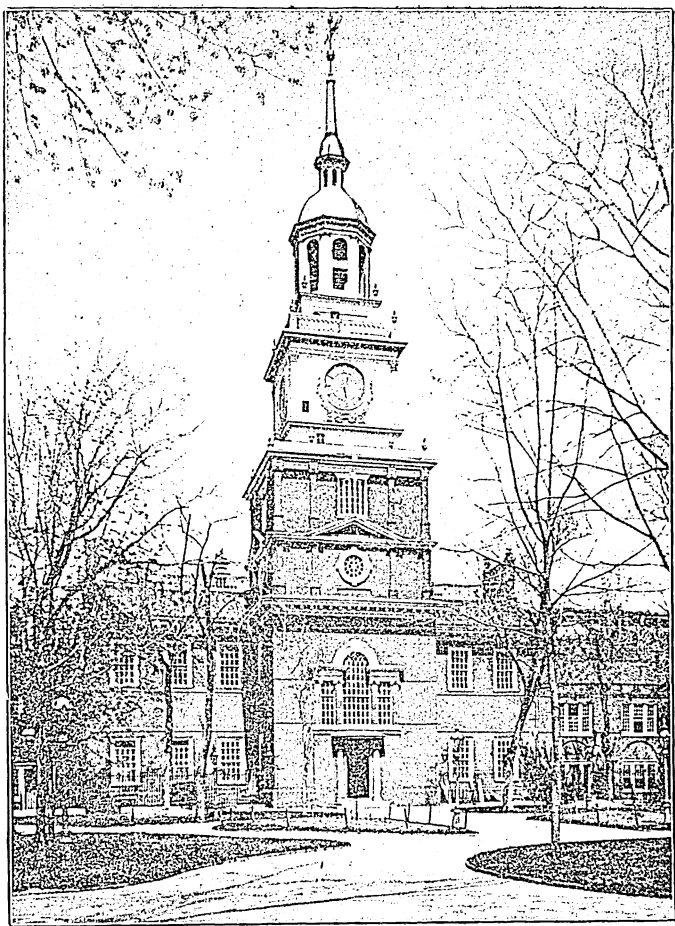
The towns of the States are linked together by railways, which are, of course, most closely set in the Eastern States.

But there are three lines which run right across the continent, while another long line joins New Orleans with San Francisco. New York is the greatest railway terminus.

One of the busiest of the eastern railways is the New York Central, which runs from the commercial capital to Buffalo, on Lake Erie, a distance of about 450 miles. It serves the most densely populated part of the Eastern States, and does a great deal of the trade with Canada.

4.—A Glance at American History.

America consists of two great continents, covering a total area three and a half times that of Europe. It is peopled by Eskimos, Indians, British, French, Italians, Germans, Spaniards, and their descendants, who, in a



INDEPENDENCE HALL, PHILADELPHIA.

sense, are all Americans. Yet the name has been taken by the people who occupy the central part of North America ; and when we speak of the Americans we mean the inhabitants of the United States, not the people of the whole American continent.

Sir Walter Raleigh was one of the earliest colonizers of the lands on the Atlantic sea-board which formed the first home of the American race, but his colony of Virginia was not in his time a success. Then the Pilgrim Fathers came over in 1620, and landed on the coast a little to the north of Cape Cod. They had much trouble with the Indians, but little by little their "New England" settlements grew and prospered ; and these people are looked upon by many of the Americans as the founders of their nation.

After the Pilgrims came many other bands of settlers, who founded various colonies along the coast, each keeping up its connection with the home Government, and governing itself so far as its local affairs were concerned. The Dutch also made settlements, but in time their city of New Amsterdam fell into the hands of the British, and was re-named New York.

Among the most notable of the bands of colonists was that of the Quakers, led by William Penn, who became the founder of Pennsylvania. On the western bank of the Delaware he planted what he called "the seed of a nation." He did not fight the Indians, but dealt justly and kindly with them, and they repaid him with respect and affection such as they showed to no other of the white leaders.

In time there were colonies all along the coast from Cape Cod to Florida. Each of them rapidly throve and

prospered. Large quantities of tobacco, indigo, and rice were grown, and a great coasting trade sprang up which was hampered by pirates until stern measures were taken for their suppression.

When the colonists of the Southern States began to cultivate tobacco, rice and cotton, they greatly felt the need of cheap labour; and they solved the question by importing negro slaves from Africa, who were used to a moist, hot climate, and able to work in those parts of the country where white labour could not possibly be had.

The colonists, especially those who pushed westwards from the coast, had much trouble with the French, who claimed the whole of the basin of the Mississippi. There were frequent fights in this region; and it is in reading the history of these campaigns that we first meet with the name of George Washington, afterwards the first President of the United States.

The American colonies quarrelled with the Mother Country over taxation by the British Parliament. They objected to paying taxes made by a body to which they sent no members; they would tax themselves through their own governing bodies, or they would not be taxed at all.

Time went on, and the breach widened. Able men on both sides argued the matter with tongue and pen. But they could not come to any agreement, and in 1775 war broke out. In the following year the leaders of the colonists published the famous Declaration of Independence, which created a new nation, and, as it has since proved, a new World Power.

"We hold these truths," declares this document, "to be self-evident: That all men are created equal; that

they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. . . . We therefore, the representatives of the United States of America in general Congress assembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions, do, in the name and by the authority of these colonies, solemnly publish and declare that these United Colonies are, and of right ought to be, free and independent States."

The war went on for some time, but when it was over George Washington was elected President. At that time there were not so many people in the whole of the States as there are now in London. They were settled near the Atlantic sea-board in the thirteen States which formed the new nation. Now there are fifty divisions known as States and Territories in the Union, the country stretches right across the Continent, and the population is double that of the United Kingdom. This represents the progress of about 130 years.

This progress was seriously disturbed by a war, which took place during 1861-65. It was a civil war, for the Northern States fought the Southern States, partly over the question of freeing the negro slaves, partly because the Southern States claimed the right to set up a separate confederation of "Cotton States" and break away from the Union. The Northerners were champions of the slaves and of the unity of the country, and in the end they were victorious.

In our own time the United States fought with Spain, and took from that country her possessions both in the West and East Indies. Before this war the United States had no foreign possessions, except the Hawaiian Islands



A WOMAN OF THE PHILIPPINES.

in the Pacific, and concerned herself chiefly with her own affairs. Now she holds the Philippine Islands, in the East Indies, and acts as a kind of protector to Cuba and Puerto Rico in the West Indies. Thus she has taken the first step towards the forming of a colonial empire. This is a most

important change in American history.

5.—The People of the United States.

The people of the United States are mainly, as we have seen, the descendants of British settlers who left our islands in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries at various times and for various reasons. They are, therefore, not foreigners, but kinsmen of our own. They speak the English language; they read the works of our great poets, historians, novelists, and other men of letters. Their mode of life is very like our own, though there are certain marked differences between the Englishman and the American.

The American has plenty of room. Everything around him is on a great scale. The physical features of his country—the mountains, rivers, plains, and lakes—dwarf those of our own land in comparison; the storms which sweep across the continent in winter-time work destruction such as we seldom experience. It is a region of great things, and seems to have developed in its people a desire to do things great in proportion.

So we find the typical American energetic and pushing, never daunted by difficulties, however great they may be. He is ever ready to adopt new ideas, and to lead the way for the nations. He delights in experiments, and these

must be on a large scale. He lives at high pressure, and usually thinks that the people of the Old Country are very slow to move.

Yet he loves our quiet England as a rule, though he may not say so. And many American people have made their homes in our country after piling up great fortunes in trade or industry on the other side of the Atlantic.

The American form of government is republican, and in theory all citizens are free and equal. There are no titles of nobility—no dukes, lords, ladies, baronets, or knights, as in our country.



AN AMERICAN CAMPER.

Certain officers of the State are styled "the Honourable," but this is the only title in America, if, indeed, it can be called by the name. A President is elected once every four years, and he lives at the White House in Washington. He is the chief officer of the State, and in the work of carrying out the law he is assisted by a small council, like our Cabinet, of which each member has charge of some special work. One is the War Secretary, another the Secretary of the Treasury, and so on.

Laws are made by Congress, which consists of two chambers, the Senate and the House of Representatives. The latter is like our House of Commons, its members being elected by the votes of the people. The former is in some ways like our House of Lords, but the members are elected by the councils or parliaments of the separate States; for each State has its own Parliament for local affairs.

The American people think a great deal of education, and there are free State schools in all parts. There are also a large number of schools where girls and boys are trained for business, or for taking part in the skilled work of American factories. High schools and colleges are numerous, and there are Universities at Cambridge, in Massachusetts (Harvard), New Haven, in Connecticut (Yale), and at Chicago.

The people whom the white settlers of this country displaced were the Red Indians—a brave, hardy, and intelligent race, of fine physique, who might possibly have driven away the "pale-faces" if their various tribes had combined. They were a poetic race, too, with a fine store of legends, such as we can read in Longfellow's "Song of Hiawatha," a poem which gives

us a good idea of the life and thoughts of an Indian chieftain in the olden days.

The present condition of the Indians differs very much from that of the tribes who roamed far and wide over the prairies and through the forests in search of food or in pursuit of an enemy.

They are obliged to live in certain districts known as reservations, and they are not allowed to hunt or fish beyond the boundaries of these territories. Numbers of them now live in most ways like the white men, and engage in ranching and stock-farming. Others refuse to give up the customs of their ancestors, and try to live as far as possible in the same way as they did. They still preserve their love for their own tribe and family, but their glory is departed, and it seems as if the race was doomed to die out.

When the negro slaves of the Southern States were set free, many of them remained on the plantations, and were paid wages like other workers. Others went to the cities and got work as waiters, porters, and messengers; and their presence is one of the features of the American cities which help to remind the English traveller that he is not at home.

A glance at the map will remind us that the United States has no powerful neighbours like the countries of Europe. This has given the country a great advantage in building up a great trade and improving her industries. The minds of her people have not been distracted by wars and rumours of wars, nor have many of them been drawn from the arts of peace to form a large army or man a powerful navy.

The United States, however, is now a World Power,

and will most likely increase both her army and navy. For, as years pass by, she is becoming interested in questions dealing with far-off parts of the world, and must be prepared to make her power felt if need should arise.

CHAPTER X.—THE JAPANESE EMPIRE.

1.—A General Survey.

JAPAN has been called the "Britain of the Far East." The name is a good one, as a little thought will show. Like our own country, Japan consists of a number of islands lying near a continental shore on a great ocean highway, and facing America. Japan has, on the whole, a climate similar to our own, for though we are nearer to the North Pole, we have the benefit of the warm drift from the south-west across the Atlantic. Lastly, Japan is a progressive nation. Her people have during the last fifty years made great changes in their mode of life, and now try to imitate ourselves in every way. This has meant a loss of much that was picturesque, but in a very short time Japan has won a high place among the nations.

The largest of the Japanese islands are Hondo, Yezo, Kiu-siu and Formosa. The last-named was only added to the empire in 1895, after the war between Japan and China, which helped to give the former country a firm standing as a fighting power. The area of the Empire is about a third larger than that of our country, and the number of people is rather more.

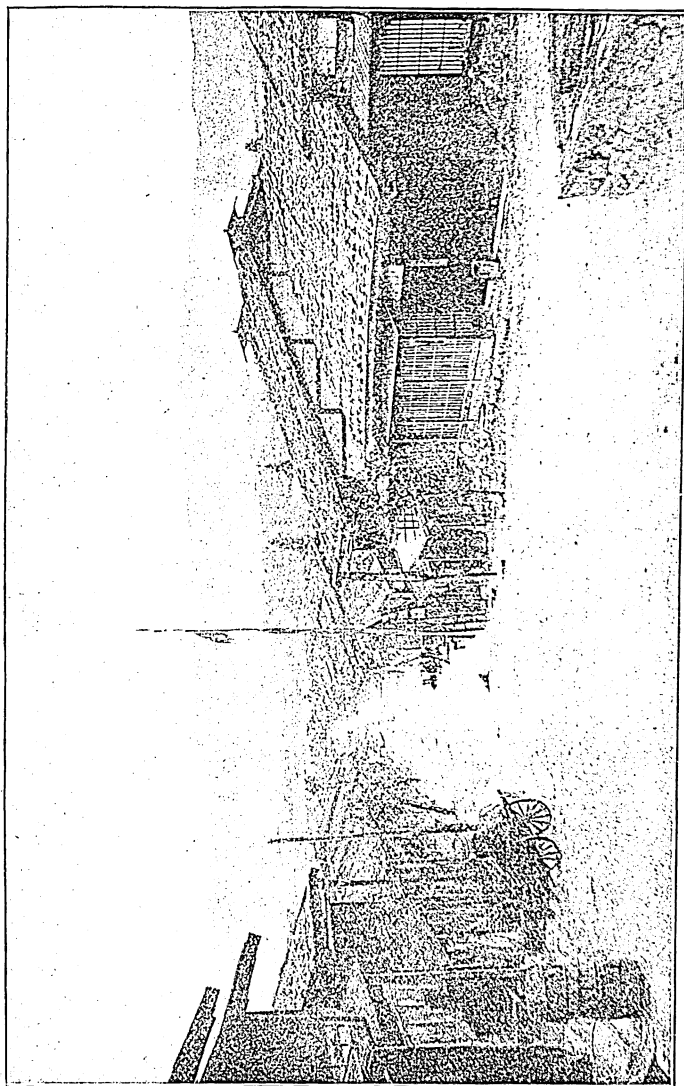
The Japanese islands are mountainous, and contain several volcanoes. The best-known mountain peak is

that of Fuji-san, a perfect cone, which rises from the plain in the middle of the island of Hondo. It is the sacred mountain of the Japanese, and appears in most of their pictures and designs almost as often as the chrysanthemum, the national flower. In winter the upper part of the mountain is covered with snow, and, seen from a distance, looks like a huge cone supported in mid air. Fuji-san is a volcano, but only from one spot near the summit, where steam comes out, is there any sign of the fact. For a very long time there has been no eruption, but the mountain is red-hot within, and, so far as we can tell, is capable of dealing death and destruction for miles around.

Shocks of earthquake are common in Japan, and the people seem to be quite used to them. They build most of their houses of paper and bamboo, and make them, as a rule, only one story high. In this way they accommodate themselves to the earth-wave, and if a Japanese house is thrown down, it is not a very difficult matter to set it up again.

Japan is well watered with numerous rivers, but the streams are mostly rapid torrents in their upper courses, and shallow, broad, lake-like expanses of water in the plains. They are not, therefore, of very great use for navigation; but the gorges through which many of them pass in their upper courses provide many scenes of great beauty and grandeur.

The finest scenery in Japan is that round the shores of the Inland Sea, which lies between the lower portion of Hondo and the islands of Sikok (or Shikoku) and Kiu-siu. "The whole scene baffles description," writes a traveller—"islands, bays, terrace-ribbed hills, woods of



A TYPICAL JAPANESE VILLAGE.

stately trees, wooden villages nestling in every recess. The sea, resplendent as a mirror, was without a ripple, and fleets of fishing-junks were dotted about everywhere. It was simply a fairy scene that passes description."

There is scenery of wonderful beauty, too, round the Lake Biwa, the largest sheet of fresh-water in Japan, lying in the southern part of Hondo. The water of this lake is of a clear green colour, and it is encircled by tree-clad mountains, on whose slopes rest many towns and villages, set among well-cultivated farm lands. Many old Japanese stories and legends tell of things which happened in this beautiful country, and, to the mind of the traveller, help to add to the charm of the scenery.

Japan has many wide stretches of forest land, and trees are planted by the roadside in most parts of the country, for the Japanese have a fine eye for effect in landscape. One of the most useful of their trees is the bamboo. From the stems they make boats and houses. The seeds and small young shoots are prepared in various ways and eaten. They also make paper, beds, baskets, and numerous household articles from this tree. Another valuable tree is the mulberry, on the leaves of which the silkworm is fed; and the Japanese make a great deal of fine silk, both for their own use and for export.

Travellers in Japan are always struck by the profusion of flowers to be seen wherever they go. The chrysanthemum is the favourite flower, and in November, when the plants are in full bloom, Japanese gardens are a dream of colour and beauty. In the spring-time, when the pink-white cherry-blossom is hanging in clusters from the leafless trees, the people hold high festival.

2.—Japanese Industries.

Here is a little story told by an English traveller* in far-off Japan :

“An ivory-carver sat in his little room, open to his little garden, chiselling upon a magnificent tusk, from which the form of a very graceful figure was just emerging. ‘Are you not very sorry sometimes to part with one of these works that has been part of your life so long?’ I asked. He shook his head. ‘No; I expect the next will be more beautiful.’”

The answer showed that the man was like many of his countrymen, not only a workman, but an artist, who loved his work for its own sake. The Japanese craftsman lives, as a rule, in his own cottage, along with his apprentices, and turns out beautiful carvings, inlaid china, enamel work, and lacquer-work, made with rare skill and taste.

Lacquer is got from the lacquer-tree, and the secret of its preparation is carefully kept by the Japanese. Numerous articles are made of wood or paper and covered with the liquid paint several times, till the surface takes a bright hard polish. Large quantities of lacquered articles are exported, and Japanese ware is commonly seen in English homes.

Factories have lately been started in Japan, and the manufacture of cotton-yarn and cotton-cloth is steadily growing. The silk manufacture is another important industry, and the products of the silk-looms take first place among the exports of the country.

Japan aims at becoming a manufacturing country

* H. Norman, in “The Real Japan” (Fisher Unwin).

and at extending her markets all over the world, after the fashion of the Western Powers. But the larger number of her people are still employed on the farms, plantations, and market-gardens.

There are large tea plantations, but not much of the tea is sent to our country. Most of it goes to the United States and Canada, and it is often used for blending with other varieties. Rice is an important crop, and forms one of the chief foods of the people; a drink called *saké*, much liked by the Japanese, is also brewed from it. From the well-kept gardens excellent vegetables and fruits of many kinds are sent out; but in many parts it is impossible to ripen fruit, owing to the large rainfall in autumn.

A certain number of the people find employment in the mines. In the central part of Hondo there are valuable mines of copper, the largest in Asia. There are several coal-fields in the country, the best being found in the islands of Yezo and Kiu-siu. As in other volcanic countries, sulphur is abundant, and gold and silver are found in small quantities. There are not many stone-quarries, but, as we have seen, the Japanese do not, as a rule, build their dwellings of stone. A glance at the illustration on page 211 will give a good idea of the nature of Japanese houses.

The coast fisheries of Japan give employment to about fifty times as many men as in our country, and fish forms an important article of food. Pickled fish and rice is a favourite dish among the people. There is also much fishing in the rivers, which yield salmon, a kind of trout, and many other varieties. On some of the rivers there are many house-boats, in which people



A JAPANESE CRAFTSMAN.

live all the year round. Here is a picture of a river scene at Ozaka, in the south of Hondo:

"Many of the boats were anchored side by side. We could see their flat-hatted owners doing little jobs on board,—preparing meals, fishing, or bartering with their neighbours. Now and then a house-boat would float past, the four rowers chanting a weird refrain, which came clearly to us over the surface of the water. The tiny *sampans* (boats) were as numerous as flies on a summer evening, and sculled in and out between the bigger craft with wonderful skill."

During recent years the outside trade of Japan has increased enormously. There are numerous good roads in the country; railways now run between the leading towns; steamships have been built, and besides being used to carry away exports, they are also employed as carriers between foreign ports. There are several busy ports round the coasts, the largest of which is Yokohama, the port of the capital, Tokyo.

3.—Some Japanese Towns.

Tokyo, once known as Yedo, is the chief city of Japan. It is built on a low plain at the mouth of a river which flows into a wide bay on the eastern coast of Hondo. In the centre of the city is a castle surrounded by pleasant groves. But the business part of the place is not imposing, for the low houses are nearly all built of wood, and give the city a very tame and monotonous appearance. On the outskirts there are many well-kept gardens and pretty lanes, with neatly-trimmed hedges on either side.

Tokyo has no harbour, and only the small vessels

known as junks can come up to the city. Eighteen miles away stands Yokohama, to which the goods made in the capital are sent by rail for export. Not very long ago this town was a small fishing village; now it is a busy town, with numerous warehouses, shops, stores, offices, and bungalows, in which live the merchants. From this town to Tokyo runs the imperial road known as the Tokaido.

The older capital of Japan is Kyoto, in the south of Hondo. It is a city of palaces and temples, and one of the chief centres of Buddhism in the world. In one temple there is an enormous statue of Buddha, before which great religious festivals are held, attended by people from all parts of the country. The worshipper, it is said, will write a prayer on a piece of paper, chew it to pulp, roll it between his palms, and then throw it at the god. If it sticks to the image, his prayer will be answered; if not, he goes away disappointed.

Here is a little picture sketched by a traveller who paid a visit to the great sanctuary of Buddha when it was thronged with worshippers. He was standing near the statue of Binzuru, who is said to heal diseases, when he saw a little girl who had hurt her knee by a fall being led towards the statue by an old woman.

"Hand in hand they crossed over to Binzuru. The old woman clapped her hands, bowed, muttered a prayer, stroked the god's knee with her withered hand, then rubbed the little human knee tenderly. The cure was effected at once. The little child smiled up at the ugly image gratefully, with affection in her eyes. His stony stare seemed beautiful to her; dear old Binzuru had kissed her knee and made it well, so of course she loved



THE STATUE OF BUDDHA.

him, and would think of him often sitting there in the dimness of his temple home, waiting to heal little children who had hurt themselves.”*

Ozaka, on the south coast of Hondo, not far from Kyoto, is the second largest town in Japan. It has been called the “Venice of the Far East,” because of its

* “Three Rolling Stones in Japan,” by Gilbert Watson (Edward Arnold).

numerous canals. Many of the people live in boats on the river, or in houses set on piles by its banks. The town is the chief centre of the cotton-spinning industry in Japan, and has lately taken to building ships—not the old-fashioned native junks, but modern steamers like those of other great trading countries.

South-west of Kyoto is Kobe, another busy port with a large number of curiosity shops, much visited by tourists. Here one can buy all kinds of wonderful and beautiful things—carved ivory figures and ornaments, exquisite china, inlaid and enamelled goods in great variety, cunning work of the jeweller, goldsmith, and silversmith, small gods and goddesses, and carved demons, both large and small, and of inexpressible ugliness.

On a splendid harbour of the west coast of Kiu-siu stands the port of Nagasaki, surrounded by lofty wooded mountains, at whose base are many trim plantations of trees which furnish vegetable-wax; the product of these plantations forms an important export. There are rich coal-fields not far from this town, and it has now ship-building yards, and carries on a large trade with China and Korea.

4.—The People of Japan.

The people of Japan belong for the most part to the Mongol, or Yellow race. They are, as a rule, very small in stature, and have pale faces and long, lank, black hair; they are fond of gay colours, and the women show much taste in dress. The *obi* of the Japanese woman is a loose dress of soft material fastened round the waist, with a broad, brightly-coloured sash tied in a large bow

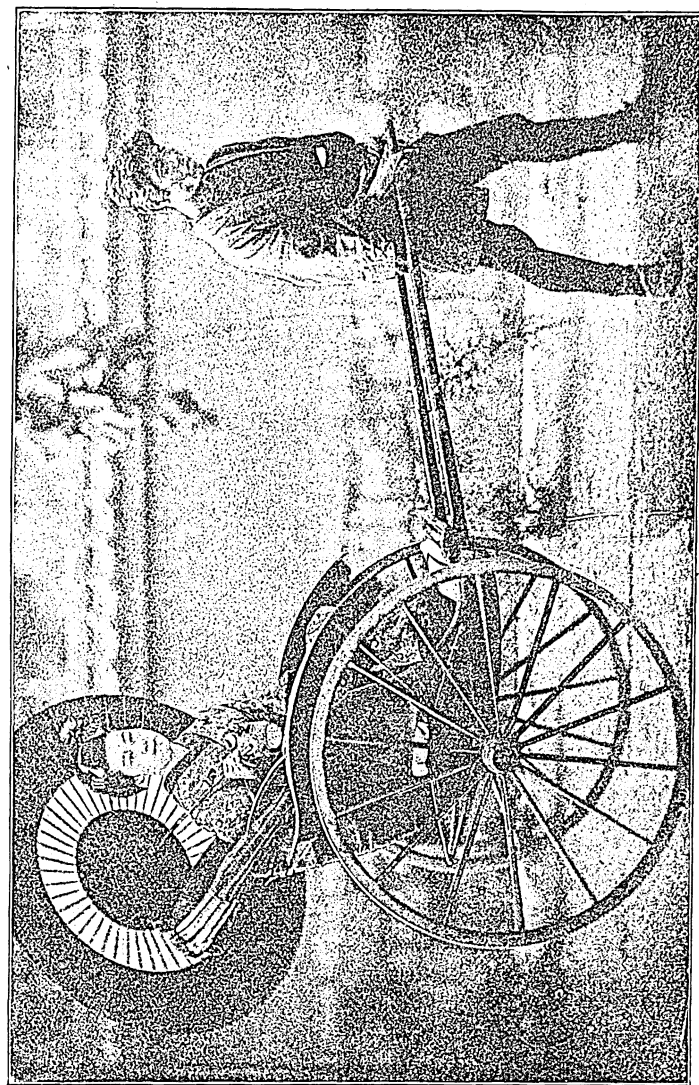
behind. She wears sandals on her feet, and her jet-black hair is coiled up in rolls and ornamented with long pins; she has almond-shaped eyes, dark lashes, small and very white teeth, and red lips. The girls and younger women are usually very pretty, graceful, and dainty.

The men, on the other hand, are not very good-looking; but they are very polite, obliging, and full of good humour. A traveller calls Japan a "land of littleness and laughter"; for wherever he went he found the people, almost without exception, full of good humour and inclined to make merry over the little ills of life.

The Japanese are a very cleanly people, and the hot baths in their towns and villages are very well used. Their homes are also spotlessly clean, and are kept so by the custom of removing the shoes at the door before entering the house. The floors are covered with clean-white matting, and the inmates sit, not on chairs, but on cushions, and take their food from low tables not much higher than our footstools.

They use chopsticks, and are very skilful at picking up their food with them. They eat a great deal of fish prepared in various ways, much fruit and vegetables, rice and sweetmeats, sometimes sprinkled with pepper, but very little meat. Their drink is chiefly tea and *saké*, which is brewed from rice.

Japanese girls play on the samisen, an instrument somewhat like a guitar or a banjo. They smoke fine powdery tobacco in small pipes, sometimes of silver and delicately chased; and when a girl wishes to be polite to a visitor, she will present her pipe to her guest after lighting it.



A JAPANESE JINRICKSHA.

Geisha girls go from house to house to amuse the people who can afford to hire them. They play on the samisen; they go through wonderful dances; they act little plays, which consist chiefly of movements of the head or hands and changes of expression, which are full of meaning—at least, to those who are used to this kind of entertainment. The plays in the Japanese theatres are very long, and at one time a single play used to last for several weeks. They are, as a rule, very sad and gloomy, and the applause often consists, not of cheers, but of groans.

“The first duty of a Japanese householder,” writes a well-known journalist,* “on rising in the morning, is to take down the front of his house. It is literally slid away, and the interior left in full view. The houses are full of people, and yet the street is thronged and gay with pictures. Here is a woman washing vegetables in water drawn from the street well. Next door is a cooper’s shop, further on a man mending tins. On the opposite side of the road a woman spreads out rice to dry on mats. Her neighbour carefully stretches on a board the blouse she has been washing for her husband.

“Here is a butcher’s shop with chrysanthemums blooming among the shoulders of mutton and ribs of beef. There is a grocer’s shop with father, mother, and three children squatted round the stove, each with a hand over the glowing charcoal, for the morning air is keen.

“The man pounding rice next door has no need of a stove to keep him warm, nor has the man carrying water in two tubs slung on a bamboo pole and carried across

* Mr. H. W. Lucy.

his shoulder; all portable property is carried in this way. There comes down the street what looks like a vast bed of chrysanthemums; but it is only a coolie carrying innumerable pots on two trays slung from his bamboo pole."

One of the most interesting of the street sights is the jinricksha, or "man-drawn carriage," a two-wheeled conveyance with a hood, somewhat like a baby-carriage on a larger scale. At one time such a carriage was looked upon as sacred to the Mikado, and other people went about in Sedan-chairs, something like those which were once used in England; but now the jinricksha is very common in Japanese towns.

"To most travellers," writes a visitor, "the jinricksha is a new mode of conveyance; there is something exhilarating about it. It awakes the boy in you, and you are prompted to shout aloud in very glee. The little car is so diminutive, so toy-like, that you feel strangely out of place seated in its tiny arm-chair. The fear of breaking it is never absent from your mind. And then, too, its owner—the human steed—is so akin to all your thoughts of childhood that you feel as if you and he were playing a game, and a dreadful fear besets you that soon he will put down the tiny shafts and inform you that it is now your turn to become the horse."

Japanese children are very small and quaint. They are taught to be very polite, and in greeting a stranger in their own homes will fall on their knees and bow so as to touch the matting with their foreheads. The heads of the boys are shaven on the top, but the hair is left in a ring about the level of the ears. Babies are carried, not in the mother's arms, but on her back. Boys play

with kites made of many wonderful shapes; girls have quaint little dolls, and one of their favourite games is very like our shuttlecock and battledore.

The increase of trade in Japan, and the desire of the people to live like Western nations, made great changes in the country. Many of the people in the larger towns have taken to wearing European dress, and in every way they are very anxious to imitate the civilized white nations, and especially our own.

It is not very many years ago that the people of Japan began to have any extensive dealings with outside nations. Before that time the Dutch had traded a little with the port of Nagasaki, but the rest of the country had been entirely closed to foreigners. There were two rulers—one a kind of military dictator at Yedo, now known as Tokyo, and the Mikado at Kyoto.

The United States led the way in the attempt to open out Japan to foreign trade. There was a good deal of opposition on the part of the people, and in the disturbances which took place the Mikado was able to make himself supreme ruler of the country, and to establish himself as sole emperor at Tokyo.

Then Japan began her wonderful career of advance. A House of Parliament consisting of two chambers was set up, somewhat on the model of our own. Railways were laid, the telegraph and telephone were introduced, and a postal system started. Numbers of Japanese were sent to be educated and to learn trades and professions in Western lands. A navy of modern warships was established, the army was remodelled, and when war broke out with China in 1894, the Japanese were able to gain an easy victory.